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COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA.

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES.

SECOND SESSION, 1917.

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SEVENTH PARLIAMENT:

SECOND SESSION.

Governor-General.

His Excellency the Right Honorable Sir RONALD CRAUFURD MUNRO FERGUSON, a Member of His Majesty's Most Honorable Privy Council, Knight Grand Cross of the Most Distinguished Order of Saint Michael and Saint George, and Commander-in-Chief in and over the Commonwealth of Australia

Australian National War Government.

(From 17th February, 1917.)

Prime Minister and Attorney-General	..	..	..	The Right Honorable William Morris Hughes, P.C.
Minister for the Navy	..	..	..	The Right Honorable Joseph Cook, P.C.
Treasurer	..	..	..	The Right Honorable Sir John Forrest, P.C., G.C.M.G.
Minister for Defence	..	..	..	The Honorable George Foster Pearce.
Vice-President of the Executive Council	..	..	..	The Honorable Edward Davis Millen.
Minister for Works and Railways	..	..	..	The Honorable William Alexander Watt.
Minister for Home and Territories	..	..	..	The Honorable Patrick McMahon Glynn, K.C.
Minister for Trade and Customs	..	..	..	The Honorable Jens August Jensen.
Postmaster-General	..	..	..	The Honorable William Webster.
Honorary Minister	..	..	..	The Honorable Littleton Ernest Groom.
Honorary Minister	..	..	..	The Honorable Edward John Russell.

Senators.

President—Senator the Honorable Thomas Givens.

Chairman of Committees—Senator John Wallace Shannon.

¹Bakhap, Thomas Jerome Kingston (T.)
Barker, Stephen (V.)
Barnes, John (V.)
Bolton, Lieut.-Col. William Kinsey (V.)
Buzacott, Richard (W.A.)
Crawford, Thomas William (Q.)
De Largie, Hon. Hugh (W.A.)
Earle, Hon. John (T.)
Fairbairn, George (V.)
Ferriks, Myles Aloysius (Q.)
Foll, Hattil Spencer (Q.)
Gardiner, Albert (N.S.W.)
Givens, Hon. Thomas (Q.)
Grant, John (N.S.W.)
Guthrie, Robert Storrie (S.A.)
Guy, James (T.)
Henderson, George (W.A.)
Keating, Hon. John Henry (T.)
¹Long, Hon. James Joseph (T.)

Lynch, Hon. Patrick Joseph (W.A.)
Maughan, William John Ryott (Q.)
¹McDougall, Allan (N.S.W.)
Millen, Hon. Edward Davis (N.S.W.)
Needham, Edward (W.A.)
¹Newland, John (S.A.)
O'Keefe, Hon. David John (T.)
O'Loughlin, Lieut.-Col. Hon. James Vincent,
V.D. (S.A.)
Pearce, Hon. George Foster (W.A.)
Plain, William (V.)
Pratten, Herbert Edward (N.S.W.)
Reid, Matthew (Q.)
Rowell, Col. James, C.B. (S.A.)
Russell, Hon. Edward John (V.)
Senior, William (S.A.)
Shannon, John Wallace (S.A.)
Thomas, Hon. Josiah (N.S.W.)

1. Appointed Temporary Chairman of Committees, 12th July, 1917.

those who are unemployed to obtain the jobs of those who are employed.

Mr. FINLAYSON (Brisbane) [3.39].—If we are to have an efficient Railways Department, this restriction on the right of the Commissioner to employ the men he thinks best qualified to render good service is most dangerous. The Commonwealth railways are likely for a considerable period to be isolated, and it will be scarcely worth a good man's while to go to them for a six months' job. The alteration the Minister suggests is an advantage, but the whole clause is so destructive of efficiency that the Commissioner might well be left to exercise his discretion as to whether a man is suitable or not. If he is not, he should not be there a week, and if he is, his services should not be dispensed with. The more the Commissioner is left to his own discretion in this matter the better it will be for the efficient working of our lines.

Mr. CORSER (Wide Bay) [3.41].—The honorable member for Brisbane has stated the very reason why the clause should be retained. If temporary work is available a considerable distance away, the Commissioner may want to send to it a good man from the central depôt, and put in his place a temporary hand who is beyond the statutory age which would allow him to go on the permanent staff. Without this provision the Railways Commissioner would be debarred from appointing many men to temporary work, and numbers who are over the age would be prevented from obtaining it.

Mr. KELLY. — Nothing prevents the Commissioner from putting a man on temporarily. We want him to have the discretion to keep him on.

Mr. CORSER.—Has he not that discretion?

Mr. KELLY.—Not under this proviso.

Mr. CORSER. — If the Commissioner finds that a man is an efficient officer after he has been employed for six months, and he is under the statutory age, can he put him on the permanent staff?

Mr. WATT.—In order to do that under this Bill, he has to increase the number of permanent officers.

Mr. CORSER.—Would he not do so, if necessary?

Mr. WATT (Balaclava—Minister for Works and Railways) [3.42].—The Commissioner might not get the consent of the Minister to do so. This provision is not in force in South Australia or Western

Australia; but it is in Victoria, New South Wales, and Queensland. In New South Wales it is more stringent. There six months is the maximum time for supernumerary employees, and there must be a full six months' break. The theory is, as the honorable member for Hindmarsh says, to make the work go round, but, as I am reminded by the honorable member for Kooyong, there is another reason. Temporary employment used to be the side door into the Service in Victoria. If a man had been continuously employed for five or six years, there was an agitation to make him permanent, and Acts were often passed conferring that privilege upon men, while others were let in by ballot selection later on. I see no fear of that in this case, and there is probably a geographical reason why we should not retain the provision. It is a "toss-up" whether the Committee retains it or not, but I am going to vote for it.

Mr. KELLY.—I ask the Minister to temporarily withdraw his amendment, that I may move a prior amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Mr. KELLY (Wentworth) [3.45].—I move—

That the following words be left out:—

"Provided that the Minister may direct that in respect of any grade no person shall be employed as a temporary employee for a longer period than six months, or in exceptional cases, nine months."

That would leave the discretion absolutely with the Railways Commissioner.

Sir WILLIAM IRVINE (Flinders) [3.46].—I think the object the honorable member for Wentworth has in view would be better served by striking out the whole of this clause, because in clause 47, in a general provision, the Commissioner is given complete discretion as to all kinds of employment, and may employ any person. If clause 55 be agreed to, even though the proviso be left out, the effect may be to hamper the administration of the Commissioner under clause 47.

Mr. KELLY (Wentworth) [3.47].—I ask leave to withdraw my amendment, and suggest to honorable members who think as I do on this matter that they should negative the clause as it stands.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Clause negatived.

Clauses 56 to 63 agreed to.

Clause 64—

(1) Subject to this Act any private lands, or, with the consent of the Minister, any lands

being Crown lands of a State, public parks, recreation grounds, roads, or lands which have been dedicated, reserved, or set apart for any public or other purpose whether by any State or by any private person, may be acquired by the Commissioner for the purposes of a railway.

(2) The provisions of the Lands Act Acquisition Act 1906-16 shall apply, with such modifications as are prescribed, in relation to the acquisition of any lands under this section.

Mr. WATT (Balaclava—Minister for Works and Railways) [3.49].—Honorable members will recognise the object of this clause, but it is desirable to make a few verbal amendments. I desire to move—

That after the word "modifications" the words "and adaptations" be inserted.

I propose to move another amendment at the end of the clause.

Mr. FINLAYSON.—I should like to move a prior amendment.

Mr. WATT.—Then I will not submit my amendment until the honorable member's amendment is dealt with.

Mr. FINLAYSON (Brisbane) [3.50].—I move—

That after the word "State," line 3, the words "public parks, recreation grounds, roads, or lands which have been dedicated, reserved, or set apart for any public or other purpose, whether by the State or by any private person," be left out.

My object must be perfectly clear, but I do not know whether I shall achieve it properly by this amendment.

Mr. WATT.—The honorable member proposes to leave out too much, because there are occasions when it is necessary to take roads. We had to do it at Port Augusta.

Mr. FINLAYSON.—I object very strongly to the inclusion in this clause of the words "public parks and recreation grounds." I protest against the Commonwealth having any power whatever to interfere, for railway purposes, with public parks and recreation grounds. The Lands Acquisition Act, which is referred to in this clause, clearly defines that such areas shall not be included in lands that may be acquired by the Commonwealth. This is the definition of "Land" given in the Lands Acquisition Act:—

"Land" includes any estate or interest in land (legal or equitable), and any easement, right, power, or privilege over, in, or in connexion with land, and includes Crown land, but does not include public parks vested in or under the control of municipal or local authorities, and dedicated to or reserved for the recreation of the people, or such other lands

dedicated to or reserved for the use and enjoyment of the people as have been certified by proclamation.

Mr. KELLY.—Would not the honorable member's amendment cover such areas as stock reserves, for instance?

Mr. FINLAYSON.—I was coming to that. Large areas of country lands are frequently reserved as timber and water reserves. It would, I admit, be foolish to refuse to give railway rights over such areas, but the clause under consideration is so worded that it covers specifically public parks and recreation grounds, and that is what I object to.

Mr. WATT.—I have realized the sentimental objection with respect to parks, and have safeguarded it partly by requiring Ministerial consent in such cases. If necessary, it might be provided that before anything of this kind was done a report should be made to Parliament, and honorable members would then have an opportunity of objecting to any proposal that might be made. If I undertake to embody such a provision as that in the clause, perhaps it will suit the honorable member's purpose.

Mr. FINLAYSON.—That would certainly be a considerable advantage. The Minister has no intention, I believe, of encroaching upon public parks and recreation reserves?

Mr. WATT.—Unless it be absolutely necessary on public considerations. I know of cases of the kind in the City of Melbourne.

Mr. TUDOR.—It was necessary to take part of Yarra Park to widen the area available for railway purposes, and the same kind of thing may have to be done again.

Mr. FINLAYSON.—The Melbourne instances in point that have been quoted to me since I made my remarks last night have but added to the reasons why I protest against any repetition of this kind of thing.

Mr. WATT.—Sober sentiment in Melbourne approves of those instances, but some fanatical sentiment does not.

Mr. FINLAYSON.—It is not fanaticism that seeks to preserve open spaces for the people. There are far too few of them in our towns and cities at the present time. I protest against any power being given to either a State or the Commonwealth Government to interfere with

public parks and recreation reserves. I am told that it would not be possible to get from Flinders-street station to any of the eastern suburbs of Melbourne without going through some of the lands that were previously park lands. That raises the question whether Flinders-street station is in the right place at all for a railway station.

Mr. WATT.—That is a sample of the considerations we find ourselves up against in dealing with this question.

Mr. FINLAYSON.—If park lands are not encroached upon to such an extent as to destroy their utility, there may not be a great deal of objection, but honorable members may not be aware that authorities on town planning are all agreed that the Flinders-street railway station is in the wrong place.

Sir ROBERT BEST.—They are a little late, are they not?

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—The reference of such proposals to Parliament should be a sufficient safeguard.

Mr. FINLAYSON.—Does the Minister propose to introduce the safeguard to which he has referred when the Bill reaches the Senate?

Mr. TUDOR.—No; here.

Mr. WATT.—I am afraid it cannot be done here. The provision requires to be carefully drawn, but I give the honorable member for Brisbane an undertaking that in respect of the acquisition of public parks and recreation reserves Parliament will be given an opportunity to object before any proposal of the kind is brought into operation.

Mr. FINLAYSON.—My object is to protect parks and recreation reserves in the interests of the people, and on the understanding that the Minister will see that the provision he has suggested will be introduced, I ask leave to withdraw my amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Amendments (by Mr. WATT) agreed to—

That after the word "modifications" the words, "and adaptations" be inserted.

That the words "the acquisition of any lands under the section," in sub-clause (d) be left out, with a view to insert in lieu thereof the words, "lands acquired or to be acquired for the purposes of a railway."

Clause, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 65 to 73 agreed to.

Clause 74—

No person shall—

- (a) throw any gravel, stones, or rubbish, or any matter or thing upon any part of a railway; or
- (b) drive or permit to wander, stray, or be driven upon any such railway, or the approaches thereto, any horse, ass, sheep, swine, or other beasts or cattle of any kind; or
- (c) do any other act, matter, or thing to obstruct the free passage of any such railway, or any part thereof.

Penalty: Fifty pounds.

Mr. PAGE (Maranoa) [3.57].—I move—

That paragraph (b) be left out.

The man who drafted this provision did not know much about the railways of Australia. What does it mean? It means that if the sheep of a pastoralist stray on to this line he will be liable to a penalty of £50.

Mr. WATT.—What is the objection to it?

Mr. PAGE.—Unless the Government are going to fence our railways—

Mr. WATT.—We are not going to do that.

Mr. PAGE.—Then under this provision every pastoralist whose sheep stray upon the line will be liable to a heavy penalty.

Mr. PIGOTT (Calare) [4.0].—I think that the Committee should support the amendment. Most of us know that, at the present time, many of the railways in New South Wales are not protected by fences.

Mr. WATT (Balacava—Minister for Works and Railways) [4.1].—This provision obtains in Queensland.

Mr. PAGE.—Not in unfenced country.

Mr. WATT.—I can assure my honorable friend that it is part of the law of that State. A similar provision obtains in New South Wales. There, anybody who allows his stock to wander on to the railways is liable to a penalty.

Mr. PAGE.—I know different, because I had a lawsuit over the matter.

Mr. FALKNER.—Why not insert the word "wilfully"?

Mr. WATT.—If we did that, we might just as well strike out the provision. I think that we had better allow the paragraph to remain in its present form. A similar provision is already operating in the various States of the Commonwealth.

Question—That the words proposed to be struck out stand part of the clause—put. The Committee divided.

Ayes	32
Noes	14

Majority	18
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AYES.

Bamford, F. W.
 Bayley, J. G.
 Best, Sir Robert.
 Brennan, Frank.
 Cook, Joseph.
 Corser, E. B. C.
 Fenton, J. E.
 Fowler, J. M.
 Glynn, P. McM.
 Gregory, H.
 Groom, L. E.
 Hughes, W. M.
 Irvine, Sir William.
 Kelly, W. H.
 Leckie, J. W.
 Lister, J. H.
 Lynch, J.

Mackay, G. H.
 Manifold, J. C.
 McWilliams, W. J.
 Poynton, A.
 Riley, E.
 Sampson, S.
 Sinclair, H.
 Smith, Laird.
 Spence, W. G.
 Story, W. H.
 Watt, W. A.
 Webster, W.
 Wise, G. H.

Tellers:

Atkinson, L.
 Greene, W. M.

NOES.

Considine, M. P.
 Falkner, F. B. S.
 Finlayson, W. F.
 Higgs, W. G.
 Mahony, W. G.
 Maloney, Dr.
 Nicholls, S. R.
 Page, J.

Pigott, H. R. M.
 Tudor, F. G.
 Wallace, C.
 West, J. E.

Tellers:

Catts, J. H.
 Mathews, J.

Question so resolved in the affirmative.

Amendment negatived.

Mr. CHARLTON.—By way of personal explanation, I desire to draw your attention, Mr. Chairman, to the fact that, as a consequence of the bells not ringing in the different parts of the building, including the Opposition room, where they rang for only half a minute, a number of members were debarred from taking part in the division.

Mr. JOHN THOMPSON.—As a personal explanation, I desire also to say that members in the Ministerial room had a similar experience.

The CHAIRMAN.—The matter will be attended to.

Clause agreed to.

Clauses 75 to 79 agreed to.

Clause 80 verbally amended and agreed to.

Clause 81—

1. Upon the occurrence of any accident upon the railways, the Commissioner may require any person who in the opinion of the Commissioner may have been injured in the accident to be examined at the cost of the Commissioner by one or more duly qualified medical practitioners nominated by the Commissioner.

2. If any person refuses or fails to undergo examination in accordance with the provisions of the last preceding sub-section, no damages or compensation shall be recoverable against the Commissioner in respect of personal injury to that person arising out of the accident.

Amendment (by Dr. MALONEY) proposed—

That the following words be added to sub-clause 1:—

“And on request of the injured person where reasonably possible, such examination shall be held in the presence of the private medical man of such injured person.”

Mr. KELLY (Wentworth) [4.14].—Whilst I agree with the spirit of the amendment, I think the Minister would do well to look into the phraseology so that any possible misuse of the provision by litigants may be avoided.

Mr. WATT (Balaclava—Minister for Works and Railways) [4.15].—I accept the amendment, but propose to have its phraseology reviewed by the drafting authority.

Amendment agreed to.

Mr. WATT (Balaclava—Minister for Works and Railways) [4.16].—Sub-clause 2 debars certain persons who may refuse to be examined by a medical man from any right of action. It has been thought from the experience in connexion with railway accidents that a shock may occur to a man, and the effect not be discernable until sometime afterwards. He may not have had reasonable grounds to be examined on the day of the accident, or on the following day. On the arguments adduced by honorable members on the second reading, I move—

That the following words be added to sub-clause 2:—

“unless he satisfies the Court in which action is brought that—

(a) his refusal or failure to undergo examination was reasonable in the circumstances; and

(b) the Commissioner is not prejudiced in his defence by the refusal or failure of the person to undergo examination.

If a person refuses to undergo an examination, he will have to satisfy the Court that he had reasonable grounds for his refusal. I think that this provision will amply safeguard the interests of the Crown.

Dr. MALONEY (Melbourne) [4.16].—I hope that the Committee will accept the amendment. I propose to cite one example to show how necessary its enactment is. A man named James Munn obtained his life's ambition, namely, to be secretary of the Trades Hall Council. He was injured in that terrible accident known as the Richmond railway accident. He settled with the Railways Commissioners for some £40 odd. His mind was so deranged, and he was so injured by the shock that he was not properly examined by the medical men representing the Railway Department to receive such a small sum. I do not think that he had a private medical man to examine him. He committed suicide within three days of obtaining his life's ambition. I might add that shell shock is almost similar to railway shock. Mr. James Page, possibly the greatest authority on railway shock in the European world, states in his lectures that if a medical man ever finds a spinal complaint or a nervous disorder which he cannot diagnose, it will be well to go into the back history of the patient, even if he should have to go back twenty years, to see if the patient had been in a railway accident. I hope that this addition to the clause will be accepted.

Amendment agreed to.

Clause, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 82 to 88 agreed to.

Clause 89 (By-laws).

Mr. J. H. CATTS (Cook) [4.20].—I think that, as in the case of the by-laws made under most of our important enactments, the by-laws made under this measure should be placed before Parliament; but there is no such provision made here. I hold that as regards freights and fares and industrial conditions honorable members ought to be kept closely in touch with the alterations made from time to time. To achieve these objects, I move—

That the following new sub-clause be inserted:—

"4. All such by-laws shall be laid before both Houses of the Parliament within thirty days of the making thereof if the Parliament is then sitting, and if not then within thirty days of the next meeting of Parliament."

Mr. WATT.—That is not necessary.

Mr. J. H. CATTS.—The matters referred to are not provided for in the Bill.

Mr. TUDOR.—In sub-clause 3, it is provided that by-laws shall not be deemed to be statutory rules within the meaning of the Rules Publication Act.

Mr. J. H. CATTS.—I have looked at that Act, and I may tell the honorable member that it does not touch this point, but deals with other matters.

Mr. WATT (Balaclava—Minister for Works and Railways) [4.21].—There is no real objection to this amendment from the stand-point of practice, so long as it will not involve any delay in the working of the railway service, or any permission or approval, but merely gives the opportunity of disallowance. I do not object to the insertion of the provision.

Amendment agreed to.

Clause, as amended, agreed to.

Postponed clause 31 (Sale of spirituous liquors on railways).

Mr. WATT (Balaclava—Minister for Works and Railways) [4.23].—This is a clause to which I specially directed the attention of honorable members in my second-reading speech. I said that it was a debatable clause, and I might well have said it was a very debatable one. Recently the honorable member for Brisbane introduced a very representative deputation to me as the Minister in charge of this Bill. I heard their arguments, and remained unconvinced, but I promised that I would remit the matter for the reconsideration of the Cabinet. The exigencies of politics compelled me to proceed with the Bill to-day. I thought that I would have had an opportunity to consult the Cabinet before we arrived at the clause. I intend to keep my promise. Therefore, with the object of going to the Cabinet with the provision, I ask the Committee to allow me to withdraw it at this stage. If the Cabinet approves of the clause, I will endeavour to get it inserted in the measure in another place, but if the Cabinet disapproves the provision will disappear.

Clause negatived.

Mr. HIGGS (Capricornia) [4.24].—I move—

That the following new clause be inserted:—

"38A. The Commissioner may provide land on lease and house accommodation for railway employees."

I hope that this proposal will receive sympathetic consideration from honorable

members. It is to meet the case of men who are employed on the maintenance of railway lines far away from centres of civilization.

Proposed new clause agreed to.

Mr. TUDOR (Yarra) [4.26].—I move—

That the following new clause be inserted:—

“47A. Employees in the Commonwealth Railway Service shall be deemed to be employees in the Public Service of the Commonwealth within the meaning of the Commonwealth Arbitration (Public Service) Act 1911.”

Honorable members will recollect that we have given to the public servants of the Commonwealth the right to appeal to the Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration, and my intention in moving the amendment is to give the same right to our railway employees. I shall not debate the question now. Honorable members know the facts of the case. To my mind, railway servants have as much right as, and possibly more right than, other public servants to the benefits of such a tribunal.

Sir WILLIAM IRVINE (Flinders) [4.28].—The amendment raises one of the most serious questions that can be debated in connexion with the Bill, its purpose being to bring under the jurisdiction of the Arbitration Court all persons now, or in future to be, employed in the Railway Service of the Commonwealth.

Mr. J. H. CATTS.—I think they are already under that jurisdiction.

Sir WILLIAM IRVINE.—If so, the amendment is unnecessary, and the position so much the worse. The railway administration for which we are providing will control not only the lines which the Commonwealth has taken over in South Australia, and those which it is constructing, but possibly, in future, all the railways of Australia, and it will be agreed that in framing a law for the government of such a service we cannot be too careful. I am aware that Parliament has already placed the members of the ordinary Civil Service within the jurisdiction of the Arbitration Court. Personally, I think that that was an unwise thing to do, but I need not discuss the matter at the present time. We are now asked to take a much bigger step, and to relinquish control of what at the beginning will be a big business undertaking, and ultimately will grow to huge proportions. To my mind, the

working of the Arbitration Court has not been such as to afford much hope that its determinations regarding railway matters will conduce either to the satisfaction of the employees of the Commonwealth or to the efficiency of the Service. The Parliaments of the States, and, I think, this Parliament, have always been willing at all times to do justice to those whom they employ; but we are now invited to give up our control of the conditions of employment of our railway servants, and to tell them that if they wish for any alteration of those conditions, they must begin with a strike, or something in the nature of a strike.

Mr. MATHEWS.—That is the fault of the Constitution.

Sir WILLIAM IRVINE.—I agree with the honorable member, and one of the first things that this Parliament should set itself to do is to obtain from the people of Australia such additional power of legislation respecting industrial conditions as will destroy this anomaly.

Mr. WEST.—The honorable member voted against that.

Sir WILLIAM IRVINE.—I have always maintained the view that I am now expressing. No one can deny that the operation of the Arbitration Court, as applied to the conditions of private industries, has not been satisfactory. If this great commercial Department that we are creating be placed under its jurisdiction, the reasons which have led to the bad working of this tribunal will be greatly magnified, and to them will be added others that do not at present apply. In the first place, we shall invite the railway servants of the Commonwealth, if they wish for a change in the conditions of their employment, to attempt to bring it about by the creation of an industrial dispute or strike.

Mr. MATHEWS.—Not if the Minister will accept the request for an appeal to the Court.

Mr. TUDOR.—There has been no strike in the Public Service of the Commonwealth, and yet half a dozen of our Public Service organizations have obtained awards from the Court.

Sir WILLIAM IRVINE.—The provision in the law that there shall be no strikes has been without effect, though it may be true that there have not been

strikes in the Commonwealth Public Service. There is another matter to which I think it my duty to direct attention. By agreeing to the amendment we shall be relinquishing one of our most important responsibilities. We shall say to our railway employees, "We refer to a tribunal which is not responsible for finding the revenue necessary to pay for the services of Government the right to determine your conditions of employment, and your rates of pay." Parliament is asked to hand over to a Judge, or to a tribunal, the control of its finances.

1 Mr. FALKNER.—To hand over this control to one man.

Sir WILLIAM IRVINE. — Not only are we asked to hand over to the Arbitration Court the control of our finances, but we are asked to do this in respect to a huge undertaking, or series of undertakings, which are at the present moment in a hopeless financial condition. As honorable members desire to get away I shall not take up more of their time now in discussing this matter, but I cannot allow the amendment to be put without making the strongest protest against Parliament, on the initiation of a system which is to govern the railway administration of the Commonwealth, adopting so vicious and mischievous a principle as that proposed. We ought not to divest Parliament of the responsibility for determining the conditions under which the railway employees of the Commonwealth shall serve, nor should we transfer financial responsibility to whoever may, for the time being, preside over the Arbitration Court, giving him complete control of our railway management.

Mr. WATT (Balaclava—Minister for Works and Railways) [4.35].—On the principle of this matter I find myself in complete agreement with many of the observations that have fallen from the honorable member for Flinders. I have never agreed with the proposal that either a State Parliament or the Federal Parliament should hand the question of the payment of its employees over to people who have nothing to do with the raising of the money out of which those payments are to be made. But while I express that opinion, I am bound to say that the advice and the admonition of the honorable gentleman has fallen on

me four or five years too late. We have done these things.

Sir WILLIAM IRVINE.—You are asked to extend the principle.

Mr. WATT.—We are not.

Sir WILLIAM IRVINE.—If the Bill contains the principle well and good, but you are dealing with the amendment of the honorable member for Yarra.

Mr. WATT.—If this principle were outside the existing law, and this amendment were introducing it for the first time, the observations of the honorable member would have my complete concurrence, but we have operated this principle ever since 1911, because the Arbitration (Public Service) Act defines the Public Service of the Commonwealth as including "the Public Service of the Northern Territory, the territory of the Seat of Government, and the service of any public institution or authority of the Commonwealth." What we did, rightly or wrongly, by the enactments of the past was to include all then existing public services and authorities, and those to be created thereafter. This Railway Department is one such authority. As was the case with the many things said about the 4-ft. 8½-in gauge, and the mode of construction, the remarks on this point are far too late to be of real practical value at this stage, and for that reason I have not thought it advisable to reply to them before. I do not say this because I regard the remarks of the honorable member as of no value; I think they carry a timely warning to the Parliament to think this matter out anew. The principle which has been in operation for the last six years will be hard to undo.

Mr. MATHEWS.—And it would be criminal to undo it.

Mr. WATT.—I am not so sure of that. But it will be hard to undo a system that is already operative, and before it can be undone it must be thought out carefully, and the public must be convinced in regard to the wisdom of retracing our steps. I have taken counsel again with the Attorney-General on the effect of the Arbitration (Public Service) Act in relation to this Bill, and I am again advised that the railway servants provided for in the

Bill are already adequately covered by the existing law.

Sir WILLIAM IRVINE.—I am inclined to think that is so.

Mr. WATT.—That is the advice of the legal members of the Cabinet. I ask the honorable member for Yarra not to press his amendment. I will undertake to have the matter reviewed again before the Bill passes out of the reach of the Senate, and if there is the slightest doubt on this point, I will see that a clause bringing these men under the operation of the Arbitration law is introduced in another place.

Mr. TUDOR (Yarra) [4.40].—As a layman I am not competent to express an opinion upon the effect of the Arbitration law on the Service to be created by this Bill. I am inclined to think that the railway servants of the Commonwealth will come under that law, and having received the assurance of the Minister to that effect, with the additional promise that he will consult the Crown Law authorities, and if it is found that the law is not as we read it, he will have an amending clause introduced in another place, I am content. I ask leave to withdraw the amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Schedule agreed to.

Title agreed to.

Bill reported with amendments; report adopted.

Bill read a third time.

ADJOURNMENT.

NEW SOUTH WALES RAILWAY STRIKE.

Mr. WATT (Balaclava—Minister for Works and Railways) [4.42].—In moving—

That the House do now adjourn.

I desire to thank honorable members for the facilities they have granted for the passage of the Railway Bill. Another place is, unfortunately, idle, and this Bill will give it work to do.

Mr. FENTON (Maribyrnong) [4.43].—I am sorry that the Prime Minister is not present, but I hope the Minister for Works and Railways will communicate to him the questions I am about to ask. I should like to know whether the Railway Association and the other unions connected with the strike in New South

Wales are to be brought under the operation of the Unlawful Associations Act, and also, whether it is a fact that telegrams between the Railway Associations of New South Wales and Victoria are being held up? I hope the Minister will let me have a reply to those questions tomorrow morning.

Mr. WATT (Balaclava—Minister for Works and Railways) [4.44].—I will take the first opportunity of communicating the honorable member's questions to the Prime Minister. I know nothing about the matters to which he has referred, but I shall ask the Prime Minister to address his answers to the honorable member direct.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

House adjourned at 4.45 p.m.

Senate.

Wednesday, 8 August, 1917.

The PRESIDENT took the chair at 3 p.m., and read prayers.

PAPERS.

The following papers were presented:—

Lands Acquisition Act 1906.—Land acquired at Byron Bay, New South Wales—For Defence purposes.

Public Service Act 1902-1916.—Promotion of T. S. Hulme, Department of the Treasury.

THE BUDGET.

Senator MILLEN (New South Wales—Vice-President of the Executive Council) [3.1].—I beg to lay on the table of the Senate Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure for the year ending 30th June, 1918, together with the Budget papers, and to move—

That the papers be printed.

Debate (on motion by Senator NEEDHAM) adjourned.

CASE OF SERGEANT OZANNE.

Senator THOMAS.—I ask the Minister for Defence whether some papers in connexion with the case of Sergeant Ozanne have been laid on the table of the other House, and, if so, will he have them laid on the table of the Senate and printed?

Senator PEARCE.—My impression is that these papers were laid on the table of the Library.

Senator DE LARGIE.—No.

Senator PEARCE.—I shall have inquiries made; and if the papers were laid on the table of the other House I shall see that they are also laid on the table of the Senate, and then it will be for the Printing Committee to decide whether they shall be printed.

DISCHARGE OF SOLDIERS' FATHER.

Senator BARNES.—Has the Leader of the Senate any information regarding the discharge of the man Yates, about whom I asked a question a couple of weeks ago?

Senator MILLEN.—The information supplied to me is that substantially the facts set out by the honorable senator in his question are correct. But my colleague says—

It is the rule of the Service that a man may not be employed as a temporary hand for more than six months, with an additional period of three months in special cases; but in this case the Commissioner, under a more liberal practice since the war, allowed a total temporary employment of twenty and a half months.

My colleague further says—

If a place can be found for Mr. Yates I shall only be too glad to give it to him. I shall make inquiries about the matter again.

In which case Mr. Yates' application will be favorably considered.

TREATMENT OF SOLDIERS.

Senator GUY.—I asked the Minister for Defence a question a few days ago respecting some soldiers who were turned off the *Rotomohana*. Has he a reply to the question yet?

Senator PEARCE.—The honorable senator's question was—

Is the Minister for Defence aware that a number of soldiers who were on board the steamer *Rotomohana* yesterday, evidently on leave to proceed to see their friends in Tasmania, were ordered ashore just before the boat was to leave; and, if not, will he make inquiries and prevent this irritating sort of thing from happening in the future?

I have made inquiries, and the following is the report by the Adjutant-General on the circumstances referred to—

General Birdwood desired no further trench mortar battery reinforcements, as he intends to select some from infantry, consequently men

concentrated at Seymour Camp, Victoria, from the various States for trench mortar battery training had to be posted to infantry units.

2. Arrangements had been made for them to return to their respective States, but on the day that the Tasmanians were to embark on the *Rotomohana*, the Minister decided that the expense of sending men back to their various States for inclusion in infantry units from these States was not justified. The Minister's decision on this matter was only made at 1 o'clock on the day they were to embark. This decision was immediately notified to the Commandant by the C.G.S. Branch, and the men were stopped from returning to Tasmania, and returned to camp. There was no question of their being about to proceed on leave. The men concerned were given their final leave to say good-bye to their friends before they left Tasmania for concentration and training at Seymour Camp. The men were concentrated entirely for the purpose of saving expense to the Department. On arrival in England, the men will be sorted out and allotted to infantry units from their respective States.

AUSTRALIAN IMPERIAL FORCE.

SEPARATION ALLOWANCES.

Senator NEEDHAM (for Senator GRANT) asked the Minister for Defence, upon notice—

1. In view of the decision, operating since 1st July, 1917, of the Defence Department to pay separation allowance irrespective of the income of the recipient, and in view of the allegation that many mothers and widows are now being affected by the determination of the Department to deduct fortnightly from allotment payments instalments for sums overpaid for separation allowances prior to 1st July, 1917, will the Minister state what is the total sum involved?

2. Is he prepared to review the whole position with a view to a direction being given that no further steps be taken to recover the amounts alleged to be overpaid?

3. If not, will he give directions that no steps be taken against those whose other source of income was the old-age pension or that received by keeping boarders or letting rooms?

Senator PEARCE.—The answers are—

1. £12,312 5s. 4d.

2. and 3. Where the overpayment is clearly due to carelessness or negligence on the part of the officials of the Department, no refund is to be demanded. In cases where the financial circumstances of the recipients admit of recovery being effected in full, such is being done. In other cases recovery is being effected by instalments over an extended period. A large proportion of these cases is not due to errors in the work of the pay office, but to incorrect statements and declarations made by the recipients. Other cases are the result of belated advices from abroad—due to war conditions—of promotions affecting the issue of the allowance, whilst others are due to faulty action by the pay office staff during the earlier

stages of the war. The whole of these cases have been brought to light as the result of the action taken to improve the staff by the formation of a Pay Corps in the several States. The officer who was in charge of the pay staff in New South Wales at the time when the bulk of the overpayments occurred in that State has been replaced by a qualified accountant from outside the Government service, and the office re-organized.

FIXATION OF PRICES.

Senator NEEDHAM asked the Honorary Minister, *upon notice*—

1. Is it a fact that Mr. Clarke, the Federal Prices Commissioner, intends to resign from his position?

2. If so, does the Government intend to appoint a successor?

3. In view of the alarmingly high cost of living and its daily increase, will the Minister announce the policy of the Government in connexion with the fixation of prices?

Senator RUSSELL.—The answers are—

1. Yes.

2. Yes.

3. The policy of the Government is to prevent exploitation of the consumer. The welfare of the producer must, of course, be considered.

INTERNEES: ENEMY ALIENS.

Senator FOLL (for Senator PRATTEN) asked the Minister for Defence, *upon notice*—

1. How many internees have escaped from all the internment camps throughout the Commonwealth since they were established, and how many such escapees have been recaptured?

2. Are enemy aliens still allowed to carry on business in the various commercial centres of the Commonwealth?

Senator PEARCE.—The answers are—

1. Number of internees escaped from all internment camps in the Commonwealth since established, 67; number recaptured, 38.

2. Alien enemy subjects on parole are allowed to carry on their ordinary business, unless in a particular case there are special reasons for prohibition or restriction.

Senator FOLL (for Senator PRATTEN) asked the Minister for Defence, *upon notice*—

1. Has the Minister received a copy of a resolution recently passed at a conference of recruiting officers and delegates from the New South Wales Recruiting Committee, as follows:—"That this Conference urges, in the interests of recruiting, that Federal and State Governments should take further action in regard to enemy aliens in our midst?"

2. What further action does the Minister propose taking in the matter?

Senator PEARCE.—The answers are—

1. The resolution has not yet been forwarded to me.

2. Where any specific case can be given as to any alien whose actions are of a character that indicate that he is disloyal or dangerous, immediate steps will be taken to deal with the case.

MILITARY EXAMINATIONS.

Senator BARNES asked the Minister for Defence, *upon notice*—

1. Is it a fact that there is a compulsory examination for permanent N.C.O.'s in geography, history, English, and arithmetic, though they can rise no higher than warrant officers?

2. Are no examinations held for officers who may rise to the highest rank?

3. Were these examinations as applied in the first question cut out in England; and, if so, why?

Senator PEARCE.—The answers are—

1. Non-commissioned officers of the Permanent Military Forces are required before promotion to the rank of Warrant Officer to obtain a first-class certificate of education. This includes a simple examination in geography, history, English, and arithmetic.

2. Every officer is required to pass an examination prior to promotion to each lower substantive rank than that of Colonel, and a very severe educational examination on entrance.

3. As far as is known by the Department non-commissioned officers in the Imperial Army are compelled to obtain a first-class certificate of education prior to promotion to warrant rank.

FEMALE NOTE-COUNTERS.

Senator BAKHAP asked the Minister representing the Treasurer, *upon notice*—

1. What is the system in operation in connexion with the employment of female temporary clerks in the note-counting or sorting department of the Treasury?

2. Are they selected as their names are listed in accordance with the dates of their applications for employment?

Senator MILLEN.—The answer is—

1 and 2. Females for temporary employment in the Note Issue Branch of the Treasury are selected as required from the *Temporary Employment Register*, and, if suitable, in the order of their registration. The only exception to this course during the last twelve months was the re-appointment of seven applicants who had in a previous period of employment proved themselves unusually efficient, but who had not been temporarily employed by the Commonwealth during the preceding six months. This exception, which was approved by the Public Service Inspector, was necessary, as a large number of officers were being appointed to overtake arrears of work, and many of them were quite without experience.

AGRICULTURAL INDUSTRY: INQUIRY.

Senator LYNCH asked the Vice-President of the Executive Council, *upon notice*—

Whether the Government will consider the advisability of appointing a Commission to inquire into—

- (a) The number of agricultural holdings in the Commonwealth that have been converted from cereal production and dairying to pastoral production and the causes thereof?
- (b) The number of agricultural holdings that have been abandoned by their former owners during the last three years and the causes thereof?
- (c) The social, economic, and domestic condition of persons engaged in agricultural production in the Commonwealth?

Senator MILLEN.—The question is of some importance, and I have not yet had an opportunity of submitting it to the Cabinet.

Senator LYNCH.—Arising out of the answer given to me, I wish to ask for some information.

The PRESIDENT. — The honorable senator is not in order.

Senator LYNCH. — Cannot I ask a question at this stage?

The PRESIDENT. — The honorable senator will not be in order in submitting a question arising out of a reply when no reply has been made.

DAYLIGHT SAVING REPEAL BILL.

SECOND READING.

Senator MILLEN (New South Wales—Vice-President of the Executive Council) [3.14].—I move—

That this Bill be now read a second time.

A very few sentences will be all that the circumstances and the nature of the Bill demand from me at this juncture. I cannot recall any Act which was received with such general approval, and earned in so short a space of time such general condemnation.

Senator BAKHAP.—But did it?

Senator MILLEN.—Even where there is a general condemnation, there may be exceptions, and the honorable senator may represent the exception, but it is safe to say that the Act stands generally condemned. We introduced it, having nothing behind it but theory. We found that that theory, when tested by the practical realities of every-day life, does not meet Australian circumstances. This

Bill, consisting of a single clause, will commend itself on the score of brevity, if for nothing else. It simply repeals the Daylight Saving Act passed last year.

Senator BAKHAP.—In what way has it been prejudicial to any one, or shown itself a conspicuous failure? We have had no reasons for its repeal.

Senator MILLEN.—I abstained from trespassing on the time of honorable senators, because I believed that they, like myself, had received such frequent and emphatic condemnation of the Act from such a large number of people that it was hardly necessary to put forward any reasons for repealing it.

Senator KEATING.—It remains for each State to do what it pleases.

Senator MILLEN.—In my own State the condemnation has been general and very loudly expressed.

Senator THOMAS.—Not in Sydney.

Senator MILLEN.—In Sydney every housewife is up in arms against the Act.

Senator REID.—Because of the youngsters not going to bed?

Senator MILLEN.—Yes, they say the youngsters simply will not go to bed. The Act has, perhaps, proved a convenience to those lovers of golf and like forms of vice, who are enabled to spend a little more time at their hobby; but the general experience of those who have the conduct of households and of businesses has proved that the Act does not meet the circumstances of the Australian people. If honorable senators are not disposed to take the repeal Bill to their arms, as I thought they would, the forms of the Senate provide ample opportunity to discuss it or vote against it.

Senator BAKHAP (Tasmania) [3.16].—This is a conspicuous example of legislation hastily introduced, and repeal just as hastily and unwisely sought.

Senator FERRICKS.—It was going to win the war when it was being passed. Now the Government are going to win the war by repealing it.

Senator BAKHAP.—I would not say that. But if the people are so unanimously against the Act as the Minister says, it is a conspicuous illustration of the fact that what the philosophers propound is not, after all, very acceptable to the people. The Act was merely a practical utilization by the Government of the principle that it is good to go to bed early and to rise early. Mr. Giblin, a very intellectual and practical man, set himself

to secure this reform in Tasmania, and a measure similar to that on the national statute-book was enacted in that State, and, on the whole, has given satisfaction. To make it really effective in regard to Tasmania's relations with the mainland, it was desirable that the whole Commonwealth should enact a Daylight Saving Act, and that was done. A similar measure has been in force in the United Kingdom, and there has certainly been no outcry there regarding the nefarious nature of its provisions. When mining, as a young man, I put into practical operation the very principle of the Act, as did dozens of other young miners in the north-east of Tasmania. We advanced our clocks so as to have a longer period of daylight at our disposal. The Minister, like a great many other people—I do not blame him particularly for doing so—simply declaims against the Act, says that we should remove it from the statute-book, and adduces no more argument than do the people outside who cavil at its provisions.

Senator THOMAS.—Hear, hear! No reasons were given at all.

Senator BAKHAP.—The only reason given for the repeal was that some women say the children will not go to bed a little earlier. Since when has domestic control been so relaxed? If it is a convenience to the nation at the present time to use all the hours of daylight possible, such a substantial advantage should not be lightly set aside. I have this practical argument in favour of the Act—that the young women who keep the boarding-house in which I stay in Hobart have told me that there has been a substantial reduction in their gas and electric light bills since the introduction of the reform in Tasmania. I distinctly remember, some months ago, seeing a computation, in the metropolitan papers of this State, that many householders had a similar experience in Victoria. They reported a substantial reduction in their gas and electric light bills. The idea that the Act should be repealed reminds me of a statement about a philosopher, who was driven mad because of an obsession that the rapid advance of old age was caused by the watchmakers. What harm has this Act done to anybody. I believe the Act is a substantial national advantage. If it is true that it is good for us to get up early and address ourselves to our occupations at an hour which enables

us to take advantage of the lengthy term of daylight in the summer, there can be no harm in maintaining that principle on the statute-book. Seeing that it is the law in one State, and also the Mother Country, we ought to have something in the way of a practical illustration of its disadvantages before we remove it from our National statute-book. It is doing nobody any harm, and—as it is not operative at the present time, there should be no need for its immediate repeal.

Senator MILLEN.—It will be operative within three weeks.

Senator BAKHAP.—Let it operate again then and let us see whether it is productive of any mischief. I, for one, am not in favour of repealing the Act which, as a principle, has much to commend it. We ought to give it a further trial before we assume that it is distasteful to the people of Australia or detrimental to their interests.

Senator LYNCH (Western Australia) [3.22].—I support the remarks made by Senator Bakhap, for the very good reason that I was the sponsor of the Act in this Chamber, and when I expounded the reasons for its acceptance hardly one dissentient voice was heard. In view of the attempt now being made to repeal it, I am reminded of the experience of an old Roman philosopher, who, when he was addressing the multitude in the forum, and said something to gain applause, exclaimed, "What mistake have I made now?" I remember quite well that I received applause when I was passing the measure through the Senate, and while I still believe I was on sound lines, and that it will take time to demonstrate its usefulness, apparently the applause I then received had no solid foundation. Who are opposing the Daylight Saving Act? Certainly a few dairy farmers in the country are against it, and their objections, I believe, are due to the fact that owing to a faulty time-table they are obliged to get about much earlier in the day than formerly. In their case, the remedy is to alter the time-table and make it subservient to the needs of the dairying industry.

Honorable senators will recollect, perhaps, that a Victorian Royal Commission inquired into this subject, and after taking all available evidence from the urban and rural interests, arrived at the conclusion that it was about time something was done to take advantage of the

increased term of daylight in the summer months. Those employed in city occupations also declared it would be a great boon to be released from work an hour earlier, and before the buildings became heated like so many ovens, as is frequently the case. Officials of the Victorian Railway Department pointed out that it would mean a distinct saving to the Department of at least £2,000 a month, and I want now to know from those who are clamouring for economy in public expenditure, including the daily papers of this State, if they are supporting the measure for repeal, why they are silent when there is a clear chance of saving £12,000 a year, so far as the Railway Department of Victoria alone is concerned. If this saving were multiplied by six we would get in the aggregate a saving of at least £50,000 a year in railway expenditure. I shall not support the agitation for the repeal of the Act at the instance of those who are clamouring for it on behalf of some dairymen and other people who do not know really what they are finding fault with. I think the present strike in New South Wales is an indication that we have reached a stage of public uneasiness and restlessness that is inexplicable. The Government apparently have seized upon this Act as an outlet for their surplus energy. The Minister did not quote one industry or one set of individuals who objected to the operation of this measure.

Senator HENDERSON.—It was unnecessary, because objection is so general.

Senator LYNCH.—The honorable senator can speak for his own State, but all I can say is that it was only in Victoria that an attempt was made to ascertain whether a measure to save the daylight should be passed or not, and the finding of the Commission was in favour of the enactment of this law. Subsequently, however, spasmodic objections were raised and candidates were asked during the election campaign if they were in favour of repealing the Act.

Senator KEATING.—You must remember that the Opposition went to the country with this cry.

Senator FERRICKS.—And your party went to the country on a "Win-the-war" cry, and this is what you are doing.

Senator LYNCH.—We intend to win the war without the assistance of the honorable senator.

Senator FERRICKS.—Well, you have had four months' jawing about it.

Senator LYNCH.—We are going to win the war by a solid adhesion to our determination.

The PRESIDENT.—Order!

Senator LYNCH.—The serious subject before the Senate is whether they are going to support this Bill for the repeal of the Act. If we had evidence, secured by a Royal Commission, that the Act gave rise to serious disadvantages, there might be some justification for the demand made for its repeal. The measure was introduced last session, and put upon the statute-book, and we are asked to take it off again this session. Those who favour the repeal of the Act should be able to give chapter and verse for their opposition to it. I do not think that we should pass this Bill until just grounds have been shown for doing so. I intend to vote against the repeal of the Daylight Saving Act.

Senator EARLE (Tasmania) [3.31].—I have been rather surprised that honorable senators opposite who made the repeal of the Daylight Saving Act a special feature of their election campaign have not risen to give some reasons in support of the Bill now before the Senate. I remember that a certain political party at the last general elections set forth to the electors of Australia that absolutely the first thing they would do if returned to power would be to repeal the vexatious and unnecessary Daylight Saving Act. That was the first plank of their election platform. In the circumstances we might have expected that several honorable senators belonging to that party would this afternoon have stated with energy and force the reasons why they think the Daylight Saving Act should be repealed.

Senator FERRICKS.—We brought the Government to heel, and made them do it.

Senator EARLE.—The honorable senator probably understands coming to heel.

Senator FERRICKS.—No; we sent the Ministerial party to heel.

Senator EARLE.—The State which I represent was the first in Australia to enact daylight saving legislation. After mature consideration, and scientific research, the authorities of that State came to the conclusion that it would be an advantage to a large number of people if,

during the summer time, they might have a longer evening. It was felt that it would give youth an opportunity to indulge in outdoor games, and would enable the gardener to spend an extra hour in his garden. Although in Tasmania we have an electric scheme which provides illumination better and cheaper than daylight, we were willing to sacrifice State interests in that enterprise in order that householders, by being given the advantage of a longer period of daylight, might economize in the consumption of gas and electric light. I cannot see why the Daylight Saving Act should not be given a thorough and exhaustive trial. I know that some people say that it disturbs the regularity with which children go to rest, but I do not think that it makes any difference.

Senator PLAIN.—It makes a lot of difference to the children.

Senator EARLE.—I cannot see how it does. It is customary probably for a child to go to bed at 8 p.m. What does it matter to the child if under the operation of the Daylight Saving Act the mother knows that when it is 8 o'clock by the clock it is really 9 o'clock. It seems to me that as soon as the Act was passed a section of the people at once set themselves to find fault with it without giving it a trial. We on this side are advancing arguments why the Bill now before the Senate should not be passed, and apparently there are no arguments which can be advanced by those who profess to believe that the Daylight Saving Act should be repealed.

Senator KEATING.—The only reason apparently for its repeal is that certain cows were against it.

Senator EARLE.—As Senator Keating reminds me, it was pointed out that the earlier milking of dairy cows gave rise to some inconvenience in connexion with the transport of milk, but I think that might easily have been got over. The Act makes no difference to agriculturists, because they work by the sun. The farmer is always ready to come into the city at 9 o'clock of an ordinary morning, but he knows it is of no use for him to do so, because he could not at that hour do business with the different business firms. But with the Daylight Saving Act in force, when 9 a.m. means 10 a.m., he could come in at the earlier hour, and having transacted his business, get back home an hour earlier than he could other-

wise do. The Daylight Saving Act is a distinct advantage to the agricultural community.

Senator CRAWFORD.—The honorable senator would not say so if he were an agriculturist.

Senator EARLE.—I have been an agriculturist, and I fail to see how the official putting on of the clock for an hour during the summer time would make any difference to me. I did not intend to speak on this Bill, unless some arguments were brought forward in favour of it, but as those who favour the Bill apparently intend to use brute force to carry it, it is perhaps just as well that a protest should be made against it. I appeal to the common sense of honorable senators to resist the panicky effort that is being made to repeal the Daylight Saving Act before it has been given a reasonable trial. I remind them that at the beginning, and until people become accustomed to its operation, every reform has to meet with violent opposition. Even if honorable senators cannot see the advantage of the Daylight Saving Act, I appeal to them not to vote for its repeal until it has had a fair trial, unless they are satisfied that its operation is disadvantageous.

Senator MILLEN (New South Wales—Vice-President of the Executive Council) [3.38].—Every honorable senator who has spoken so far has directed attention to the fact that I did not advance any reasons for the repeal of the Daylight Saving Act. Perhaps I owe an apology to the Senate for some remissness in that regard, but I thought that argument was unnecessary. As reasons for the introduction of the Bill now before the Senate has been asked for, I should like to combat one or two of the statements which have been made by those who are opposed to it. I direct attention to the fact that two-thirds of the opposition comes from representatives of Tasmania. It is not the less entitled to respect on that account. But I am justified in directing attention to the fact that geographical considerations put Tasmania in a position somewhat different to that of the mainland. I do not know the exact distance between the southern extremity of Tasmania and the northern extremity of Queensland, but I do know that they are separated by very many degrees of latitude. Whilst it may have suited Tasmanian conditions it does not suit the conditions which obtain in

other States. The sole argument for the Act was a desire to secure more daylight. Now, there are places in Australia where the people do not want more daylight unless we are prepared to assume that men are willing to extend their labours beyond the working hours of the clock. Otherwise the Act, instead of conferring an advantage upon people, imposes a disadvantage upon them. Senator Lynch has stated that the agricultural interests approved of the Daylight Saving Act. They may have done so when they were in the realm of theory. But I would remind the honorable senator that those same interests, through the Chamber of Agriculture, within the past forty-eight hours, waited upon the Prime Minister and asked for the repeal of the Statute.

Senator BAKHAP.—Give us back our ten days, they cry.

Senator MILLEN.—Senator Bakhap asked me, to advance reasons in support of this measure, and when I put them forward he impugns my witnesses. Let me point to the experience in my own State which led to a great deal of dissatisfaction on the part of wheat growers there. When the sun affirmed that it was 5 o'clock, the clock, by legislative enactment, decreed that it was 6 o'clock. These men thus had one hour's good work ahead of them, but they were debarred from carting their wheat during that time, because the railway gates were closed against them. They had the extra hour of daylight, but they could not do anything in it. Then I would remind honorable senators that there is a very useful animal called the cow. We may prescribe what we choose by regulation, but we cannot alter the internal economy of the cow.

Senator LYNCH.—Alter your railway time-table!

Senator MILLEN.—But that will not make the cow milk differently. Those honorable senators who were here during the previous Parliament occupy a similar position to that occupied by the farmers of this country. They believed that the Daylight Saving Act would confer an advantage upon the community. But they have learned from experience that their anticipation does not square with the facts of every-day life. There is just one other matter upon which I wish to touch. If the existing Act is of advantage to Tasmania, this Bill will not do any injury to that State.

Senator BAKHAP.—The train and steamer times do not fit in.

Senator MILLEN.—Then all my honorable friend has to do is to alter the figures in the printed time-table. If there be one State of the Commonwealth which desires to retain the present Act it is possibly Tasmania, because it is the only State whose Legislature has passed into law a somewhat similar proposition. But the repeal of the Daylight Saving Act will still leave Tasmania free to retain upon its statute-book its much-cherished measure for early closing.

Senator KEATING.—During the summer there are only seven hours of darkness there out of twenty-four.

Senator MILLEN.—Then what Tasmania really needs is a Bill for the extension of darkness, and I am afraid that it is not within the competence even of this Government to supply that. We are now dealing with an Act which exercises an influence over the whole Commonwealth, and in my judgment, and that of the Government, the vast majority of the people of this country desire that the Bill which I am now submitting should become law.

Question—That the Bill be now read a second time—put. The Senate divided.

Ayes	...	...	...	22
Noes	...	...	...	4
Majority				18

AYES.

Barnes, J.	Needham, E.
Bolton, Lt.-Colonel	Newland, J.
Buzacott, R.	Pearce, G. F.
Crawford, T. W.	Plain, W.
Fairbairn, G.	Reid, M.
Ferricks, M. A.	Rowell, Colonel
Foll, H. S.	Russell, E. J.
Guthrie, R. S.	Senior, W.
Guy, J.	Thomas, J.
Henderson, G.	
Maughan, W. J. R.	
Millen, E. D.	

Teller:
de Largie, H.

NOES.

Bakhap, T. J. K.	
Keating, J. H.	
Lynch, P. J.	

Teller:
Earle, J.

Question so resolved in the affirmative.

Bill read a second time, and reported from Committee without amendment; report adopted.

DEFENCE BILL.

Bill presented by Senator PEARCE; Standing and Sessional Orders suspended; and Bill read a first time.

SECOND READING.

Senator PEARCE (Western Australia—Minister for Defence) [3.54].—I move—

That this Bill be now read a second time.

For the information of honorable senators, I may say that the first Defence Act was passed in 1903, and that since then amending Acts were passed in the following years:—1904, 1909, 1910, 1911, 1912, and 1915. The Act of 1903, of course, is the principal Act, and the Acts of 1909 and 1910 are the main amending Acts. The others are comparatively unimportant; the Acts of 1904, 1911, 1912, and 1915 dealt with minor amendments. If honorable senators will turn to volume 1 of the Consolidated Acts 1903-11, they will find the Consolidated Defence Act, which embodies the Acts as a whole, with the exception of the slight amendments made in 1915. I have arranged for the Bill to be inserted in raised type in the original Act for convenient reference by honorable senators, so that they may be able to see the exact effect of the amendments being made. Copies will be circulated to honorable senators to-morrow morning, so that they will have an opportunity to examine the provisions before the debate on the second reading is resumed.

The provisions of the Bill are largely technical and deal with certain weaknesses in the principal Act, which have been disclosed as the result of our experience of war. The original Act, luckily for Australia, was framed in time of peace, and up to the outbreak of the war we only had experience of the Act in time of peace. A large number of the sections were practically not called into operation until the war occurred, notably the sections dealing with courts martial. When many of the sections of which previously we had no experience came to be put into actual operation various defects in them were discovered, and it is thought desirable that, whilst we are faced with the facts in connexion therewith, we should amend the principal Act so as to make it more workable and perfect than it is.

Owing to the existence of the defects to which I have referred, certain action had to be taken by the Governor-General and by the Government which it is necessary should be validated, and provisions for that purpose are contained in this Bill. The provision for the delegation of the power conferred on the Governor-General, or on the District Commandants, was entirely drawn up in the principal Act with

the view to peace administration. But when we come to administer the Act in foreign and enemy countries, thousands of miles away from Australia, it is obvious that provisions which would operate quite well within Australia are found to be defective. Action had to be taken under the stress of war conditions, and it is necessary that those acts should be validated.

Then there are other details dealing with such questions as the personation of soldiers. That is an offence which has been practically created by the war conditions. There are to-day inducements to people to personate men who have been taking their part as soldiers in this great war. That is an offence which, I think, we should deal with. Men who have volunteered to serve their country and have so served it deserve all the credit and all the consideration which we can give to them. The man who has not served his country, but tries to get some of the advantages of service by personating a soldier who has done his duty, deserves punishment, and in this measure we take the power to inflict such punishment.

Then there is the question of the misuse of soldiers' decorations. The decorations which have been won by our soldiers will be prized by them and their descendants in years to come, and we feel that they should not be allowed to be used for the purpose of gain by other persons who have no right to them. We consider that there should not be traffic in the decorations which have been conferred on certain individuals because of merit or bravery on the field of battle.

Senator Colonel ROWELL.—Was not a Bill passed making that illegal?

Senator PEARCE.—A Bill was introduced here, but it did not pass. It is proposed to incorporate its valuable portions in the Defence Act.

This Bill also deals with a class of cases which have come under notice since the war in regard to soldiers who have been called up under the compulsory sections of the Defence Act for home defence. Some of these men were called up from their employment, at times for a short period, and at other times for a considerable period. Upon being demobilized it was found that some employers had replaced men, and refused to reinstate them. Under a provision in the principal Act, where a soldier of the Citi-

zen Forces is called up for his annual training, and after that training is complete he is discharged because he was absent for that period, the employer can be penalized very heavily for so doing. It was thought that that provision would govern all cases, but when cases of the kind I indicated just now arose after the war began, they were referred to the Crown Law officers. The opinion they gave was that the section referred only to soldiers called up for training, and did not cover the case of soldiers who were called up for home defence. In the present measure, we are extending that protection to soldiers who are called up for home defence, so that they shall be safeguarded, and shall not be penalized by employers because of their doing their duty to their country.

There is one provision not in the same category as those which I have been referring to, and that is a provision dealing with the parades or drills of Senior Cadets. I am of the opinion, and I think it is an opinion which most honorable senators share, that the bringing about of military training to our Senior Cadets was one of the best things which have ever happened to the youth of this country, especially that portion of the training which takes the form of physical drill. It has undoubtedly done a very great deal to increase the stamina and physical development of our youths. It has operated, I believe, to eradicate larrikinism in some of our bigger cities, and is doing a great deal in that connexion. That, at any rate, is the unanimous testimony of the police authorities, and of many parents in every State of the Commonwealth. When a man is called up for his training, whether it is a day parade or a half-day parade, or camp training, he is paid for the time which he loses from his employment. There is a schedule of payments, but in the case of Senior Cadets there is no schedule of payments, and, as a result of that, we have had till now the practice of holding these parades at night time or on Saturday afternoons or on holidays, or at times when the lads would not be working. It has to be remembered that cadets enter the Cadet Force at the age of fourteen years and continue there till they become eighteen years of age, when they pass into the Citizen Forces. A considerable number of these parades are held at night-time. It is a debatable point whether it

is wise to have so many of the parades at night-time. There are serious objections raised by parents, principally in regard to the boys who are of the age of fourteen years. They have urged that it is not a good thing to encourage the lads to go out at night, and get into all sorts of company. The parents generally have always been agitating for fewer night parades and more day parades. The Department has endeavoured to meet that request as far as possible, but we are faced with this difficulty, that if we abolish all night parades, seeing that we now take up the greater part of the Saturday afternoon, we can only do it by encroaching still further on the Saturday afternoons which are left to Senior Cadets during the year. We have all been boys, and, of course, we look back to the time when we liked to go and enjoy a game of football or cricket. I think we ought to consider that view, and give to the lads some opportunity for recreation. Then there is holiday time, when the rest of the family probably go to visit some place out of town, and we do not wish to encroach more than is necessary on the holiday period. Therefore, it is provided in the Bill that we may take more time for day parades, with the idea, not of encroaching more on the Saturday afternoon, but of holding a certain proportion of these parades on the Saturday morning. A considerable number of these lads are engaged as apprentices or in various employments. They are only receiving small wages, and it would be a hardship to them or their parents to take them away on Saturday morning and allow their pay to be docked for the period of absence. I am glad to be able to say that, although we have been doing the Saturday morning parades in the past to a limited extent, a very large number of employers have not deducted pay from the lads who have had to attend.

Senator FERRICKS.—The Brisbane Post Office is not in that category.

Senator PEARCE.—I cannot say who is or who is not; but a considerable number of employers have not done so. The Bill contains a provision which makes it illegal for any employer to deduct pay when a lad is called away for a statutory parade. The alternative is for the Government to pay, but if that were enacted, we should be faced with certain difficulties. We do not want to add to the expense of our defence system, and there is a general

desire to keep our ordinary expenditure at the normal amount. The other difficulty is that the lads get varying rates of pay, and what might be a fair rate for one lad might not be fair for another. Another consideration has determined the Government to adopt the plan in the Bill. We believe it is in the interests of the employers themselves that the lads should get the discipline that they do. They are not only fitting themselves for the defence of the country, but becoming more proficient as workmen by the mere fact of getting the drill, especially the physical drill, and the small sacrifice an employer might be called on to make in not being allowed to deduct pay from an apprentice for a few hours on a Saturday is not too much to ask of those who have the boys in their employ. The Bill, therefore, makes it illegal for any deduction to be made from any lad who is called away for a statutory parade during his working hours. There are also some portions of the Commonwealth where part of the community is available on Saturday afternoon and part is not. There are cases where we are not able to meet the whole of the requirements of a district, and some lads, when called to drill on Saturday afternoons now, have to lose time, and, if the employer likes, lose pay also. This provision will meet those cases, because the employer will not be able to deduct pay when a lad is called up for a Saturday afternoon parade.

Senator FERRICKS.—Will it be compulsory for an employer, including the Public Departments, to enable the cadets to get away during the day-time?

Senator PEARCE.—The original Act already makes it an offence to prevent any person from complying with the provisions of the Act.

Senator GUY.—Did you say that the daylight parades would be exclusively on Saturday mornings?

Senator PEARCE.—Not necessarily, because in some districts the half-holiday is on Wednesday. Discretion is left to the Department to fix any day that it thinks fit, according to the local circumstances.

The late Lord Kitchener, in his report, emphasized the necessity of making the Military College the channel through which appointments to the permanent staff should be made, and, in accordance with that recommendation, an amending Defence Bill was put through to provide that

all appointments to the permanent staff must, after a certain number of years, be made from graduates of that College. That period has now passed, and all appointments to the permanent staff have, under the existing Act, to be made from that source. There are however, some branches, such as the Veterinary Corps, where we have to keep a small permanent *personnel*, and graduates of the Military College are not necessarily trained as veterinary officers. There are one or two other non-combatant corps, where we require to appoint to the permanent staff persons who have not gone through the Military College, and power is being taken in this Bill for that purpose.

This position also arises: Over 300,000 of our citizens have gone away to the war. Some 27,000 of them have come back, some wounded, and some invalided for other causes. Many who went away as privates have obtained promotion. Some have become non-commissioned officers and some commissioned officers, in one or two cases even reaching the rank of lieutenant-colonel from the ranks. Under the existing Act, when these men come back, we should not be able to appoint any of them, commissioned or non-commissioned, to our Citizen Forces. We want power to do so. They will be valuable because of their war experience. Many of them are not in our Citizen Forces at all, and would not be qualified to enter them. We are, therefore, asking in this Bill for power to appoint suitable commissioned and non-commissioned officers, who have qualified in the Australian Imperial Force, either to their existing or to some other suitable rank in the Permanent Force.

Senator FOLL.—Without further examination?

Senator PEARCE.—Yes. It does not necessarily mean that we will take the whole of them. The power will be a discretionary one, because in some localities there might be more of these men than there are units of the Citizen Forces to absorb them, but they can be taken into the reserve of officers or put on the retired list.

Another point that has arisen is this: We have in the Defence Act a definition of "active service," but it is altogether incomplete, and in its present form unworkable. When the Act was drawn up, it was assumed that Australia would be involved in a war, and that that war would be going on in an enemy country,

or possibly in our own. But the present condition of affairs is that Australia is at war; some of our soldiers are fighting in an enemy country, such as Palestine, others in a foreign, but friendly, country such as France, and yet others are here in Australia being prepared for fighting. Some of them are employed in the Australian Imperial Force here in Australia in training, and others in the Home Service garrisoning the forts or guarding certain points, but not actually in the firing line. Each of these cases presents different conditions, in relation to matters of administration and discipline, and particularly in connexion with courts martial. We are therefore altering the definition of active service, so that we shall have two definitions—"active service" and "war service." It is believed that when these amendments are made our Act will, as the result of the experience of the war, be elastic enough to meet all the differing sets of conditions.

Senator Colonel ROWELL.—Where are you to draw the line between war service and active service?

Senator PEARCE.—There is a difference between men called up for active service in Australia and men who have voluntarily enlisted, and been sent overseas, and who are fighting in an enemy or foreign country.

Senator BARNES.—Will any of these amendments enable the Government to send men out of this country irrespective of whether they desire to go or not?

Senator PEARCE.—That question is not involved by this Bill.

Another feature dealt with generally is a number of the provisions is this: Our soldiers while in Australia are entirely under Australian administration and command, but when they go overseas, especially in such a war as the present, the conditions differ in different parts of the world. We have men in Mesopotamia, who are as a drop in the ocean compared with the numbers there, and simply a small unit in a large Force. In Egypt, a considerable portion of the Forces is Australian, and some portion is partly Australian and partly Imperial units. In France, there is a recognised corps of Australians and another corps partly Australian and partly New Zealand. All these conditions indicate how flexible our Defence Act needs to be if it

is to meet all the varying sets of circumstances.

Senator Colonel ROWELL. — They all come under the Army Act.

Senator PEARCE.—That is the point I was coming to. The permanent control oversea must necessarily be central. If six different units were sent to the war by six different agencies, they could not have six permanent heads, and so we have to recognise in the oversea service the application of the Army Act. That principle is already embodied in our Defence Act, with the limitation that the Army Act applies only in so far as it is not inconsistent with the Defence Act. That principle is still maintained in the Bill.

Senator Colonel ROWELL. — Why was that put in?

Senator PEARCE.—Because there is a difference between the Army Act and our Defence Act in regard to punishment for certain things. There is also a provision in regard to the confirmation of the finding of a court martial, which in our Act differs somewhat from the Army Act. The punishment for desertion in the Army Act is death, but there is no death penalty in the Defence Act as it stands today. It is therefore necessary to retain the provision that the Army Act does not apply where it is inconsistent with the Defence Act.

The Government, in the drafting of the Bill, have had the assistance of officers who have had the carrying out of the provisions of the Act on the field of battle, and in camps of training, preparing men for battle, and who have had the administration of it in peace time. We have been for some time past collating the result of these experiences, and also the experience of officers who have had the duty of preparing and conducting courts martial. The result is shown in this Bill, and I trust the Senate will see the necessity of passing the measure into law. It can be dealt with much more effectually in Committee than on the second reading, and I have therefore simply explained broadly its general principles.

Debate (on motion by Senator NEEDHAM) adjourned.

RAILWAYS BILL.

Bill received from the House of Representatives.

Standing and Sessional Orders suspended, and Bill read a first time.

SECOND READING.

Senator RUSSELL (Victoria—Honorary Minister) [4.20].—In moving—

That this Bill be now read a second time,

I desire to point out that it is designed to provide the necessary machinery for administration. From time to time we have either acquired or constructed railways which have thus come directly under our control, and with the near approach of the completion of the line from Kalgoorlie to Port Augusta it is advisable to have all administrative machinery ready. It is hoped that in about eight weeks' time the dream of the Western Australian people to be linked up with the east will be realized. The length of this railway is about 1,052 miles, whilst the other section of the Commonwealth line in South Australia, that from Port Augusta to Oodnadatta, is 478 miles, and the Darwin-Pine Creek railway in the Northern Territory about 200 miles, so that we have a total of nearly 1,800 miles of line directly under the control of the Commonwealth authorities.

As I have said, the Bill is, in the main, a machinery measure. Two important points for discussion included in it are the powers of the Commissioner to be appointed to control the administration; and the power, or limitation of power, to be conferred on the Minister from the political side. It is proposed, with very few exceptions, relating to construction, contracts, and power to call for reports, to place the entire management in the hands of the Commissioner, who will be appointed for a period of five years, and I think, after our long experience, this principle will be generally acceptable to the people of the Commonwealth. It is proposed to fix a maximum of £2,000 as salary for the Commissioner, and it is thought that the Commonwealth will be able to secure a very capable man for this amount. The Government are determined, however, to secure the best man available for the position, and if there is any difficulty, owing to the limitation fixed upon the salary, it is possible that subsequently the Government will ask for parliamentary authority to increase the amount.

Senator THOMAS.—What is the salary of Mr. Bell?

Senator RUSSELL.—I think £1,800 a year. The Bill provides for the appointment of a Deputy Commissioner—though there is

no intention of making this appointment immediately—who will exercise all the powers conferred upon the Commissioner in the case of the latter's illness. The Commissioner may be removed from office by an address from both Houses of Parliament, and in the event of Parliament not being in session, he may be suspended by the Minister, but in the latter case, a full statement in regard to such action must be laid before Parliament within fourteen days of the commencement of the next session. The Acting Commissioner, to be appointed if the office of Commissioner becomes vacant, may be suspended in a similar manner.

Part II. of the Act declares that the Commissioner shall be a body corporate, that he shall have perpetual succession and a common seal and for the purposes of the Bill all Commonwealth properties shall be vested in him. The Commissioner will be empowered to make contracts for the execution of work or the furnishing of material, but must obtain the consent of the Minister in the following cases:—(1) contracts for material from outside the Commonwealth exceeding £1,000; (2) contracts for supply of rolling-stock or motive or tractive power; (3) other contracts exceeding £5,000. That is to say, the Commissioner will have power to let contracts within the Commonwealth up to the amount of £5,000, but will not be able to exceed £1,000 for contracts outside the Commonwealth. Power is also given to the Commissioner to deal with breaches of contract and the carriage of dangerous goods, and with the approval of the Minister, to fix tolls, fares and charges. The Commissioner may further make arrangements with States for the connexion of State and Commonwealth railways and the running of Commonwealth rolling-stock on State railways and *vice versa*. In addition to the obligations of a common carrier there will be imposed upon the Commissioner duties in regard to construction, maintenance, repair, and inspection of the railway. He will prepare estimates of receipts and expenditure in connexion with proposed works and services, and furnish quarterly reports as to expenditure and receipts, the condition of the lines, the making of special rates, and the appointing of employees, as well as an annual report for presentation to Parliament. In other words, the Commissioner will have all the

obligations as well as the privileges of a common carrier.

Part III. of the Bill deals with railway employees and provides for the method of appointment, which, in a general sense, will be on the lines of appointments under the Public Service Act. There is provision for the establishment of a suspense account to be operated upon in connexion with the purchase of plant and stores. Money voted by Parliament will be paid into this suspense account, and all rolling-stock and other items required will be purchased from that particular fund. Likewise all realizations, such as the sale of old material, will also be paid into the fund.

A fund is to be created by the appropriation of 5s. for every £100 of revenue to be drawn on to meet claims for compensation for injury to persons other than employees. When the amount at credit of the fund reaches £20,000, payments will be suspended, and the fund kept at that amount by reimbursement of any sums drawn from it for the purposes mentioned above. In connexion with the construction of new railways the Commissioner may be called upon to make investigations and furnish reports for the consideration of the Public Works Committee. No new railway is to be authorized except by an Act of Parliament. So much of the Pine Creek to Katherine River Railway Act and the Kalgoorlie-Port Augusta Railways Act as are inconsistent with the Bill are proposed to be repealed.

Up to the present the sum of £5,756,914 has been spent on the Kalgoorlie to Port Augusta line, the cost to the Commonwealth of the Port Augusta to Oodnadatta section is £2,281,382, and as they are likely to involve the Commonwealth in a loss for a considerable number of years, it is essential we should have careful management and control. It is estimated that the loss, including interest and other charges, on the east-west railway will be £210,000, the loss on the Oodnadatta section £116,000, and the loss on the Darwin-Pine Creek line £24,000, making the total loss for the Commonwealth railways of £351,000.

Senator BAKHAP.—That is a nice start.

Senator RUSSELL.—The matter can hardly be put that way, because our railway policy was deliberately adopted to insure the successful development of those

portions of the Commonwealth affected by the different lines.

Senator KEATING.—Do the figures with regard to the Darwin-Pine Creek line include the extension?

Senator RUSSELL.—No. In regard to the Kalgoorlie-Port Augusta line the gross cost of construction at 30th June, 1917, was £5,312,213, to which must be added estimated expenditure on rolling-stock and workshops, £757,285, making the total estimated cost £6,069,498, less estimated total credits at the same date £312,584, bringing the figure down to £5,756,914 already quoted. This estimate does not include the cost of the trial survey, £20,000. The estimated cost of the complete work is £7,136,236, less credits £468,876, making the total £6,667,360.

I propose to give honorable senators now an estimate of revenue and working expenses for the Kalgoorlie to Port Augusta line for a period from 1st October, 1917, to 30th June, 1918.

Working expenses	£168,613
Revenue	159,694

Loss in working for nine months	£8,919
Interest for nine months	148,805

Total loss for nine months	£157,724
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These figures show a total yearly average loss, including interest, of £210,299.

From the inception of this work criticisms have been directed from time to time to the increased cost of the railway, as compared with the original estimate. I should like to supply, for the information of honorable senators, one or two explanations accounting for the increased cost. Mr. Deane's estimate of the 20th September, 1911, of the total cost of the line was £4,045,646. The increases upon that original estimate are accounted for in four ways. First of all an increase in the cost has been involved in the excess due to using 80-lb. instead of 70-lb. rails; in the increase in the price of materials, and in the additional mileage of sidings found to be required. The total increase of cost accounted for in this way amounts to £1,177,383.

Senator KEATING.—Can the Minister give honorable senators any details of that amount?

Senator RUSSELL.—I find that an increase of £187,576 is due to the adoption of the heavier rails, but it will be admitted that they make a better road. An

increase of £874,291 is due to the increase in the price of material, and an increased cost of £17,834 is due to the additional mileage of sidings found to be necessary. The second explanation for the increased cost upon Mr. Deane's original estimate is due to the decision to ballast the line fully with broken stone or gravel. This has involved an increased cost of £500,226. The next explanation for the increased cost is the excess due to an increase of 31 per cent. in the average rate of wages, amounting to £400,000. The balance of the increased cost is accounted for by the excess due to inadequate provision for rolling-stock, and to other under-estimates and omissions in Mr. Deane's estimate of 20th September, 1911, amounting to £544,106. These explanations account for a total difference of £2,621,715 in the cost of the line, as compared with Mr. Deane's estimate, upon which Parliament undertook its construction.

I now give the following financial statement up to 30th June, 1917, for the Port Augusta to Oodnadatta railway:—

Working expenses	£88,675
Charge for hire of rolling-stock ..	5,720
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Total working expenses	£94,395
Revenue	63,000
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Loss in working (estimated)	£31,395
Interest (estimated by Treasury) ..	85,507
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Total loss for year ended 30th June, 1917	£116,902

The financial statement for the year ended 30th June, 1917, for the Darwin to Pine Creek railway gives the following figures:—

Working expenses	£41,415
Revenue	29,982
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Loss in working	£11,433
Interest	13,228
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Total loss for year ended 30th June, 1917	£24,661

An alternative proposal has been made about which negotiations have been proceeding for some considerable time, and in this connexion I am able to give honorable senators the following information. The line from Adelaide to Terowie, on the 5-ft. 3-in. gauge, by the present route is 140 miles in length. From Terowie to Port Augusta, on the 3-ft. 6-in. gauge, the mileage is 119 miles, or a total dis-

tance from Adelaide to Port Augusta of 259 miles. The alternative route which has been suggested will be by a proposed 5-ft. 3-in. gauge line from Salisbury, Long Plains, to Port Augusta, a distance of 192 miles, making a saving of 67 miles. From Long Plains to Port Augusta, by this alternative route, is 145 miles. The present train takes 12 $\frac{1}{4}$ hours on the journey of 260 miles, and the South Australian authorities contemplate that they could accomplish the journey on the 5-ft. 3-in. gauge, direct route of 192 miles, in 5 hours, thus making a saving of 7 $\frac{1}{4}$ hours on the journey.

As affording an interesting view of the possibilities of our lines, I submit the following comparison. The journey from New York to San Francisco, over 3,250 miles of railway, takes 105 hours, or 4 days 9 hours. The journey from Brisbane to Perth, over a distance of 3,467 miles of railway, is expected to take 135 hours, or 5 days 15 hours, and this will include long stops at the capitals and at the breaks of gauge.

The question of fares has not yet been finally decided, and I want honorable senators to understand that the fares which I now suggest are only approximate and submitted for the information of the public. From Perth, Fremantle, and Northam to Adelaide it is suggested that the fares shall be—First class, £7 10s.; second class, £5. From Perth, Fremantle, and Northam to Melbourne—First class, £10; second class, £6 13s. 6d.

Senator DE LARGIE.—Does that mean that there is to be no difference in the fares from Perth, Fremantle or Northam?

Senator RUSSELL.—That is the intention as at present suggested.

Senator KEATING.—The honorable senator is quoting single fares?

Senator RUSSELL.—Yes; no return fares are suggested.

Senator NEEDHAM.—Is there to be any difference in the fares from Kalgoorlie?

Senator RUSSELL.—From Perth, Fremantle, and Northam to Sydney—First class, £12 4s. 6d.; second class, £8 3s.; and from Perth, Fremantle, and Northam to Brisbane—First class, £15 7s. 6d., and second class, £10 5s. Holiday excursion fares will be on a lower scale, and the customary concession fares are also to be provided for. These fares do not include charges for sleeping berths. In answer to Senator

Senator Russell.

Needham, I may add that between Kalgoorlie and the Eastern States fares will also be fixed, but these are still a matter of negotiation.

It is unnecessary that I should go into the history of the Kalgoorlie to Port Augusta railway. The evolutionary stages have been discussed from time to time in this Chamber, and honorable senators are quite familiar with what has taken place. The Bill clearly defines the powers of the Minister and the Commissioner, and all the matters necessary for the effective control of the Commonwealth railways. As this is a machinery Bill very largely, the matters with which it deals can probably be more effectively debated in Committee.

Debate (on motion by Senator LYNCH) adjourned.

Senate adjourned at 4.48 p.m.

House of Representatives.

Wednesday, 8 August, 1917.

Mr. SPEAKER took the chair at 3 p.m., and read prayers.

TRAINEES.

Mr. GROOM.—A day or two ago, the honorable member for Brisbane asked, on behalf of the honorable member for Macquarie, if inquiries could be made into complaints by lads employed in the Bathurst Railway Workshops in reference to the conditions under which they have to drill. The reply with which I have been furnished is as follows:—

The Commandant, 2nd Military District, reported that a complaint was received from one trainee employed at the Bathurst Railway Workshops. This trainee stated that insufficient time was allowed to permit him to appear on parade at the proper time. The case has been investigated, and the Commandant states that he will consult with the Railway Commissioners in the matter.

FEDERAL CAPITAL SEWERAGE.

Mr. STORY.—Will the Minister for Home and Territories lay on the table the report of Mr. C. E. Oliver on the water supply and sewerage scheme for Canberra?

Mr. GLYNN.—The report is a long one, and would cost a lot to print. As the estimates of expenditure in connexion with the Capital have been largely cut down, I have thought it best not to lay the report on the table, but I shall be glad to let honorable members see it.

SOLDIERS' RATIONS.

Mr. FENTON.—As butter is a wholesome and nourishing food, will the Assistant Minister for Defence arrange for that article of diet being supplied to the men in camp?

Mr. GROOM.—The honorable member for Nepean has asked a similar question. He wishes to know whether the New Zealand scale of rations cannot be adopted. It is true that New Zealanders get butter and condensed milk, but the Australian soldier is on the whole better off than the New Zealand soldier. Both prior to embarkation are paid 5s. a day, but after embarkation the Australian soldier gets 6s. a day, of which 1s. is deferred pay, and the New Zealand soldier gets only 5s. per day, of which 3s. are deferred pay. At the present time the Australian dietary is on a liberal scale, and more than is absolutely necessary for the requirements of the men. In certain camps soldiers are obtaining condensed milk as an "in lieu" ration.

Mr. ORCHARD.—Why do they not get it in all the camps?

Mr. GROOM.—It is open to them to do so, but were the Government to give as an extra the New Zealand ration of 2 oz. of butter and an eighth of a tin of condensed milk per man, the cost for 30,000 men would be £375 a day, and if 4 oz. of butter were given, £625 a day. Our dietary scale is a liberal one, and as "in lieu" rations can be given, it is not considered advisable to alter it.

ORDER OF BUSINESS.

Mr. TUDOR.—Will the Prime Minister say what is to be the order of business to-day?

Mr. HUGHES.—The first business will be the delivery of the Budget statement by the Treasurer. Afterwards the Assistant Minister for Defence will move the second reading of the Australian Soldiers' Repatriation Bill, and the Minister for Home and Territories will move the second reading of the Naturalization Bill.

Finally, the Public Service Bill will be dealt with. The War-time Profits Tax Assessment Bill will not be proceeded with until to-morrow.

REFUSAL TO LOAD STEAMER.

COST OF LIVING.

Mr. BOYD.—Is it a fact that the steamer *Houtmann* has left the port of Melbourne for foreign parts half empty because the wharf labourers refused to load her?

Mr. HUGHES.—I do not know whether the steamer has left yet, but I have been informed that the wharf labourers decline to load her, or, I understand, to coal her. In this port the wharf labourers and the stevedores belong to two distinct unions, both of which belong to the same federation. The stevedores assist in loading on the ship itself, while the wharf labourers are employed on the wharf. It is the latter who have declined to load this vessel. The stevedores are ready to work. I have received a quasi-official report of the circumstances, and I am getting a full report, which I shall make available to-morrow. I shall then state the policy of the Government in regard to the matter.

Mr. HIGGS.—Is it not alleged that the reason the wharf labourers are taking the action the Prime Minister has referred to, is the high prices charged for food? I desire also to know whether the Government have considered the question of the high cost of living, and what is their policy in regard thereto?

Mr. HUGHES.—It is true that the reason put forward as a pretext by the wharf labourers for their refusal to handle cargo is that the exportation of this wheat or flour might have some effect on the price of bread. Some representatives of the Waterside Workers Federation waited upon me as a deputation yesterday, and I then put forward certain facts which they made no attempt to refute. Those facts were very clear, and a complete answer to any of the statements made by the wharf labourers, who are, I am perfectly sure, the dupes of designing and cunning men in our midst—

Mr. MATHEWS.—Why not say that it is German gold?

Mr. HUGHES.—I am not alluding to the honorable member. The facts show

conclusively that bread is sold in Australia at a lower rate than in any one of the belligerent countries—that bread is little, if any, higher in price than it was in pre-war days—and that there is no room for rigging the market in regard to wheat and flour, because this is all, or practically all, vested in the Government of the country. The industry is under the control of the Government, and the whole of the receipts therefrom go through the channel of the Government direct into the pockets of the producers. As to the second part of the question, the policy of the Government in regard to the cost of living is precisely the same as that of the Government of which the honorable member for Capricornia was a member. The cost of bread is exactly the same now as it was then.

DYSENTERY REMEDIES.

Mr. GROOM.—On Friday, the 3rd instant, Mr. Finlayson, for Mr. Nicholls, asked the Minister representing the Minister for Defence, upon notice—

For what reason was the offer of Mr. Niel Featherstone for the free use of his dysentery remedies refused by the Defence Department?

The reply then given was—

Inquiries are being made, and the honorable member will be informed as soon as possible.

I am now able to inform the honorable member—

The position is that Mr. Featherstone has been asked to furnish the nature and particulars of his specific to enable an opinion to be arrived at.

It is not the practice of the Department, I may add, to experiment on soldiers of the Australian Imperial Force.

UNIFORM ROLLS AND TAXATION FORMS.

Mr. MACKAY.—Does the Prime Minister recognise the great inconvenience existing in the present duplication of election rolls and land and income tax returns for the Commonwealth and State? Is it the intention of the Government to introduce legislation this session for the purpose of providing—(a) uniform electoral rolls; (b) uniform returns for income tax; (c) uniform returns for land tax?

Mr. HUGHES.—The Government does recognise the great inconvenience caused by the present duplication of electoral

rolls and land and income tax returns. The Government, through its representatives, at the last Premiers' Conference arranged for the preparation of one roll for State and Commonwealth, and one return for Commonwealth and State income taxes. This alteration is being pushed forward as rapidly as possible, and the delay is not to be attributed either to this or the State Governments. It is purely a question of machinery; and the various Taxation Departments, Commonwealth and State, have the matter in hand.

PRECAUTIONS AGAINST PLAGUE.

Dr. MALONEY.—In view of the published deaths in India of 6,000,000 of people from plague, will the Government, bearing in mind the myriads of mice infesting the various States, instruct all their surgical and medical Departments to collaborate with the State medical Departments to take adequate precautions against the introduction of plague rodents from the East?

Mr. HUGHES.—Yes.

WAR-TIME PROFITS TAX ASSESSMENT BILL.

Mr. HIGGS.—In view of the Treasurer's invitation to honorable members to give due notice of any amendments they desire to move in the War-time Profits Tax Assessment Bill, I desire to know whether the right honorable gentleman himself will give us due notice of any amendments he proposes?

Sir JOHN FORREST.—Yes, I shall be very glad to do so.

AUSTRALIAN IMPERIAL FORCE.

TRANSFERS: TUBERCULOSIS IN CAMPS: LAND FOR RETURNED SOLDIERS.

Mr. ARCHIBALD.—What is the reason that soldiers in camp are allowed to transfer to the artillery, seeing that infantry are required at the Front, and that the departure of artillery from Australia seems a very remote contingency?

Mr. GROOM.—I am not aware of any reason; but I shall make inquiries and inform the honorable member.

Mr. FENTON.—Seeing that the health of the people of the Commonwealth is of paramount importance, will the Prime Minister immediately communicate with the Premiers of the various States in

order to ascertain what action, if any, the State Governments are taking with a view to the reduction of tuberculosis in camp?

Mr. HUGHES.—I shall, of course, take whatever action is necessary to deal with this matter, but I cannot help observing that, as we have already had a reference to the plague, and I now am asked about tuberculosis, it is evident we shall have to amend the Litany and pray, "From plague, tuberculosis, and the Opposition, good Lord, deliver us!"

Mr. MACKAY.—Is the Prime Minister aware of any reason for the refusal of the Queensland Government to join in the scheme for making financial provision for the settlement of returned soldiers on the land, as agreed by the Commonwealth Government at the Premiers' Conference held in January last.

Mr. HUGHES.—Yes, I am aware of the reason. The reason put forward by Mr. Hunter, acting on behalf of the Queensland Government, was that the proposal involved an undue interference with the rights of the States, and that, therefore, he was unable to recommend its adoption by his Government. I do not agree with that view, but that was the reason given.

ARMY RECRUITS.

MEDICAL INSPECTION.

Mr. GROOM.—With reference to the statement made last Thursday week by the honorable member for Brisbane that it had been announced in the press that a Select Committee had been appointed to inquire into the medical inspection of recruits for the Army, I now desire to intimate that a cablegram has been despatched to the Imperial Government, requesting that copies of the report be forwarded to Australia.

CONSUMPTION OF HONEY.

Mr. RODGERS.—In view of the extension of apiculture, will the Prime Minister endeavour to make available for the export of honey portion of the limited shipping space available, and also seek to popularize the use of honey in camps in Australia, as is done in America and elsewhere?

Mr. HUGHES.—I assume that the honorable member refers to a statement made yesterday by a deputation which

waited upon me. I shall endeavour to do what he has suggested.

OVERSEAS MAILS.

Mr. ARCHIBALD.—Has the Postmaster-General considered the desirability of sending Australian letters by way of San Francisco, and thence under the American flag to England?

Mr. WEBSTER.—The Department is making use of every available avenue in order to continue as well as practicable the mail service between Australia and Europe.

COST OF LIVING.

PRICE FIXING—QUEENSLAND MEAT EMBARGO.

Mr. HIGGS.—Will the Prime Minister inform the House when the Government propose to attempt to reduce the high cost of living?

Mr. HUGHES.—The fact has probably escaped the honorable member's attention that the Government have been directing their attention to that matter for a considerable time. Probably the honorable member is not aware that maximum prices are fixed for a number of commodities, amongst them being the staple products upon which the people live. Prices are fixed for flour, wheat and its by-products, sugar, butter, and rabbits. Of course, all these things are beneath the honorable gentleman's notice.

Mr. TUDOR.—Does the Government propose to regulate the price of meat, the increase in which exceeds that of any of the other commodities he has mentioned?

Mr. HUGHES.—The honorable gentleman will remember what he did in regard to this matter during the time he was in office. I am sure that you, sir, would be only too glad to afford the House an opportunity of hearing from the honorable member what he did, so that we might go and do likewise. The honorable member knows perfectly well what has been the position in regard to meat, and he is as well acquainted as any man with the many difficulties in connexion with the regulation of its price. It is practically impossible to regulate the price of meat unless we regulate the price of cattle on the hoof. I know of no way—and in this regard I sit at the feet of the honorable member—of compelling a man to raise stock except at such prices as will pay him, nor do I know of any

means by which human nature can be so changed as to immolate itself and sell in any market other than the best. The workers will not do so, and honorable members of the Opposition would be the first to blame them if they did. I would, at any rate. The man who grows meat is no less a producer than the man who works on the wharf. What we have to do, if possible, is to hold the scales evenly between all sections of society. I invite honorable members sitting in Opposition, and also those people outside who are seeking to mislead the unfortunate men who are compelled to work on the wharfs for their living, to pull this chestnut out of the fire, to explain: how the price of living—meaning thereby the prices of wheat, flour, sugar, butter, rabbits, and so forth—can be reduced below its present level, except by the exploitation of the man who produces those commodities, and who works, at least, as hard as any other person in the community.

Mr. PIGOTT.—Have the Government taken any steps to have the embargo placed by a Labour Government on the export of beef and mutton from Queensland removed?

Mr. HUGHES.—The embargo which was formerly in existence has been removed, and I do not think that any honorable member opposite would defend the imposition of it.

Mr. FENTON.—Will the Prime Minister have investigations made into the accuracy of statements that have been made that stock and station agents in Melbourne and elsewhere are limiting the supplies of stock to the market every week in order to keep up the price of meat?

Mr. HUGHES.—I shall be pleased to make inquiries into the operation of any rings or arrangements that have a tendency to exploit the public, or to create an artificial scarcity. Every honorable member, no matter on what side of the House he sits, is elected to see that all sorts and conditions of men get a fair deal. I am perfectly persuaded that honorable members opposite will not say that the man who grows meat has not the right to get a fair return for his labour. On the other hand, no honorable member on this side will say—certainly, I do not say—that any one has the right to create an artificial

scarcity, and fill his pockets at the expense of both the consumer and the producer. I shall make inquiries in order to expose such conduct, and if it is found that certain persons are acting as stated, I shall take steps to see that they are punished.

Mr. PIGOTT.—Is the Prime Minister aware that the Queensland Government are preventing fat cattle from passing to other parts of Australia owing to the fact that beef cattle are affected by the tick pest, which is an imaginary complaint?

Mr. HUGHES.—I have a great reverence for "tick," as have most men who have known adversity, but I am not aware to what extent the Government of Queensland are using the tick danger as a means of preventing the movement of cattle southwards. I am sure that the honorable member for Calare would not suggest that the precautions which are necessary to prevent the spread of such a very serious disease should not be taken. On the other hand, I quite agree with him that it should not be made a pretext for other action. However, I shall make inquiries into the matter.

Mr. PIGOTT.—Does not the Prime Minister know that most of the fat cattle and sheep are sold in the paddocks in country districts, and not in saleyards, as alleged by the honorable member for Maribyrnong? Therefore, the stock and station agents have nothing whatever to do with the increase in prices.

Mr. SPEAKER.—Order! The honorable member must not debate the matter.

Mr. HUGHES.—I confess that I know nothing of the manner in which sheep and cattle are sold. I know that in New South Wales they are sold in the yards at Homebush, and I suppose the same conditions prevail in Victoria. I presume that stock are sent down to saleyards in order to suit the interests of the seller. I can hardly conceive that stock and station agents as such, unless they are the owners of the sheep or cattle, can withhold them from the market.

MILITARY PAY OFFICE.

Dr. MALONEY.—I desire to ask a question in reference to a case that has just been brought under my notice, viz.:—The wife of ex-Sergeant Wood, with 722 days' service with the Australian Imperial Force, died on the 29th April, leaving two children, but no money

reached those children from the Pay Office until yesterday, when a sum of £9 15s. was paid. My question is whether the officer in the Department who was guilty of leaving these orphans without means of support will be punished, and whether steps will be taken to prevent such a thing occurring again?

Mr. GROOM.—I shall have inquiries made into the matter immediately.

Mr. ORCHARD.—I ask the Honorary Minister whether the Departmental Commission appointed to inquire into the workings of the Pay Office at Victoria Barracks has finished its deliberations, and when its report will be made available to honorable members?

Mr. GROOM.—If the honorable member will repeat his question to-morrow, I shall have inquiries made in the meantime.

YOUTHFUL RECRUIT PUNISHED.

Mr. MATHEWS.—Is the Honorary Minister aware that there is a youth sixteen years of age undergoing twenty-one days' confinement in the Bendigo camp? He enlisted when he was fifteen years of age, and any one should have seen that he was not eighteen years old. Will the Honorary Minister have inquiries made with a view to releasing this "criminal"?

Mr. GROOM.—I shall have inquiries made into the matter, and if the honorable member will repeat his question to-morrow, I will endeavour to furnish him with an answer.

SMALL ARMS FACTORY.

PLANT AND OUTPUT.

Mr. JOHN THOMSON asked the Minister representing the Minister for Defence, *upon notice*—

1. Did the contract entered into between the Commonwealth Government and Messrs. Pratt and Whitney, New South Wales, for the supply of necessary plant for the Small Arms Factory at Lithgow, provide that the plant should turn out a rifle interchangeable in all its parts with the rifle then approved and in use by the British Government?

2. Is the rifle now being made at Lithgow interchangeable with that now approved and in use by the British Government?

3. Is the number of rifles now being turned out at Lithgow equal to the stipulated and proved capacity of the original plant, plus that estimated from the plant since added, allowing for the double shift of workmen employed?

4. Have statements showing the annual expenditure and output of the factory been

presented, and what year is covered by the statement last presented?

5. Can the cost to the Commonwealth of each finished rifle be ascertained from such statement. If so, what is the cost?

Mr. GROOM.—The answers to the honorable member's questions are as follows:—

1. Yes.

2. Yes, but a slight alteration in the sighting would be required before the ammunition now used in France could be effectively used. Steps have been initiated to alter the Australian rifles accordingly.

3. Owing to reasons not connected with the plant the number of rifles now being turned out is not equal to the stipulated capacity allowing for increases of plant and double shift.

4. Yes. The statement for the year ended 30th June, 1916, will shortly be presented to Parliament.

5. Yes. For the year 1915-1916 the actual cost per rifle was £7 17s. 8d.

AUSTRALIAN IMPERIAL FORCE.

SENTENCES: DEATH PENALTY.

Mr. WEST (for Mr. MAHONY) asked the Minister representing the Minister for Defence, *upon notice*—

Will the Minister state—

1. The number of members of the Australian Imperial Force who have been sentenced to periods of detention of twenty-eight days or more—
(a) before embarkation, (b) after embarkation?

2. The number of members of the Australian Imperial Force who have been sentenced to the death penalty?

3. The number of cases where the death penalty has been carried into effect?

Mr. GROOM.—The answers to the honorable member's questions are as follows:—

1. The compilation of the information asked for would involve reference to the awards of Commanding Officers from the beginning of the war, and in the absence of proper records in the early part of the war it would not be possible to arrive at any accurate result. To compile a record of Commanding Officers' awards abroad, the individual records of over 300,000 men would have to be searched. No statistics of this kind are collated.

2 and 3. Some sentences of death have been passed, but none have been executed.

CONCENTRATION CAMPS.

INTERNMENT OF ENEMY SUBJECTS.

Mr. FINLAYSON asked the Minister representing the Minister for Defence, *upon notice*—

1. How many persons are at present interned in concentration camps in Australia?

2. How many of these were—(a) born in Australia, (b) born in enemy countries, (c) born in the territory of the Allies, (d) born in neutral territory?

3. Will the Government consider the advisability of separating the Australian-born internees from the others?

4. Will the Minister cause an investigation to be made as to whether the general conditions and arrangements of the concentration camps are satisfactory?

Mr. GROOM.—The answers to the honorable member's questions are as follows:—

1. On the 1st July, 1917, 5,411 men, besides 101 women and children at Bourke.

2. Interned persons are not classified according to birthplace, but according to nationality. Information as to birthplaces could be compiled only by examining the record of each person, which would involve a great amount of work and no result of any value to the Department of Defence.

3. Consideration is at present being given to this matter, and instructions have been issued for the preparation of plans and an estimate of cost. The separation of the Australian-born internees will involve a re-arrangement of the present huts at the Holdsworth Camp. A decision will be given as soon as the necessary particulars are to hand.

4. The Minister has at various times sent special officers to inquire and report, and he considers that the general conditions and arrangements at the concentration camps are satisfactory. It is not, therefore, considered necessary to cause special investigation to be made.

FEDERAL TERRITORY COMMISSION.

PRINTING OF EVIDENCE.

Mr. WEST (for Mr. J. H. CATTS) asked the Minister for Home and Territories, *upon notice*—

1. Was the evidence given before the Federal Territory Royal Commission set up and printed at the Government Printing Office?

2. Has such evidence been laid before either House of Parliament? If not, why?

3. Who is responsible for the withholding of the said evidence from Parliament?

Mr. GLYNN.—The answers to the honorable member's questions are as follows:—

1. The evidence is now being printed at the Government Printing Office.

2 and 3. It is not usual to lay upon the table of the House copies of evidence taken before a Royal Commission. The evidence taken in this case will be available as soon as it is printed.

TRANSPORT WORKSHOP, PORT MELBOURNE.

OVERHEAD CHARGES.

Dr. MALONEY asked the Minister for the Navy, *upon notice*—

1. What were the overhead charges at the transport workshop at the New Pier at Port Melbourne?

2. What are the overhead charges at Cockatoo Island?

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—The answers to the honorable member's questions are as follow:—

1. Approximately, 18 per cent. on total amount of direct labour and material charges. No engineering work was carried out at the New Pier, all such work being done by separate agreement.

2. In 1916, the average overhead charges were 46 per cent. on direct labour and 10 per cent. on direct material charges. At Cockatoo Island all engineering work required on transports is done at the yard. This work involves heavier overhead charges than ordinary fitting work.

PAPERS.

The following papers were presented:—

Apples—Return showing exports from each State of the Commonwealth during 1912, 1913, first six months of 1914, 1914-15, 1915-16, 1916-17.

Ordered to be printed.

Customs Act—

Proclamation prohibiting Exportation (except under certain conditions) of Glue Pieces (dated 18th July, 1917).

Regulation Amended—Statutory Rules 1917, No. 158.

Excise Act—Regulations Amended—Statutory Rules 1917, No. 159.

Public Service Act—Promotion of T. S. Hulme, Department of the Treasury.

ESTIMATES 1917-18.

Mr. SPEAKER reported the receipt of messages from His Excellency the Governor-General, transmitting Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure, and Estimates of Expenditure for Additions, New Works, Buildings, &c., for the year ending 30th June, 1918, and recommending appropriations accordingly.

Referred to Committee of Supply.

BUDGET (1917-18).

In Committee of Supply:

Sir JOHN FORREST (Swan—Treasurer) [3.44].—I move—

That the first item in the Estimates under Division 1, the Parliament, namely, "The President, £1,100," be agreed to.

Since the outbreak of war, it has become the practice to present the Estimates to Parliament very late in the financial year. Many disadvantages result from such delay, and successful effort has been made to lay the Estimates for 1917-18 before Parliament at this early date after the close of the financial year.

Balance-sheet. A balance-sheet of the transactions of the Consolidated Revenue Fund of the Commonwealth in the current and preceding financial years is submitted in the following condensed form:—

	RECEIPTS.	
	Actual. 1916-17.	Estimate. 1917-18.
Indirect taxation	£15,606,441 ..	£13,630,000
Direct taxation	8,916,572 ..	10,650,000
Postmaster-General's Department	5,488,765 ..	5,670,000
Transfer of a part of unexpended London balances .. ..	.. ..	825,355
Other sources	4,023,395 ..	4,406,300
Total Revenue	£34,035,173 ..	£35,181,655
Add balance brought forward from previous year	3,000,000 ..	2,102,177
Total available to meet the Expenditure of the Commonwealth	£37,035,173 ..	£37,283,832

EXPENDITURE.		
Expenditure on ordinary services	£15,582,959 ..	£16,600,614
Payments to States	6,270,419 ..	6,316,250
New works, &c.	4,301,530 ..	1,257,017
Repayment to Australian Notes Fund of Advance made in 1914-15	371,118 ..	..
War Expenditure out of Revenue	£26,526,026 ..	£24,174,481
Total Expenditure out of Revenue	£34,932,996 ..	£37,283,832
Balance carried forward to 1917-18.	2,102,177 ..	..
Total agreeing with total previously shown to be available	£37,035,173 ..	£37,283,832

The balance of £2,102,177 brought forward to the year 1917-18 is what remains of the surplus of 1915-16. In 1916-17 the revenue amounted to £34,035,173, and the expenditure was £34,932,996, resulting in a deficit of £897,823 on the transactions of the year.

To get a complete view of the Commonwealth finances, it is necessary not only to look at the Consolidated Revenue Fund, which has just been referred to, but also at the expenditure out of Loan Funds.

The policy of paying for permanent works out of Loan Funds, which has been hitherto followed to some extent by the Commonwealth, and is followed by all the

States, was not adhered to in the financial year 1916-17. In the present financial year, however, it is proposed to pay out of loan for works, which are detailed in the Estimates, and which are estimated to cost £2,742,725.

The total Receipts and Expenditure of the Commonwealth from revenue and Loan Funds may be summarized as follows:—

RECEIPTS.

	Actual. 1916-17.	Estimate. 1917-18.
Revenue of year	£34,035,173 ..	£35,181,655
War Loans raised or to be raised	50,611,889 ..	70,253,590
Works Loan to be raised .. .. .	.. .. .	2,742,725
Total Receipts of year	£84,647,062 ..	£108,177,970
Balances brought forward—		
Revenue	3,000,000 ..	2,102,177
War Loan	20,233,115 ..	17,745,163
Total	£107,880,177 ..	£128,025,310

EXPENDITURE.

Out of Revenue—		
Not including War	£26,526,026 ..	£24,174,481
War	8,406,970 ..	13,109,351
War Loan Expenditure	53,099,841 ..	84,051,230
Works Loan Expenditure .. .. .	.. .. .	2,742,725
Total Expenditure of year	£88,032,837 ..	£124,077,787
Balances carried forward:—		
Revenue	2,102,177 ..	.. .. .
War Loan	17,745,163 ..	3,947,523
Total	£107,880,177 ..	£128,025,310

The foregoing does not include loan moneys raised for State works and handed over to States.

Customs and Excise Revenue. The Customs and Excise Revenue of the Commonwealth reached its highest in 1915-16, when the receipts amounted to £16,934,103. During 1916-17 the revenue began to fall, and, in that year, amounted to £15,606,441. In the present financial year it is estimated that only £13,620,000 will be received, even without allowing for any reduction of revenue resulting from the policy of the Government in relation to the prohibition of luxuries. An announcement as to this policy will be made this week.

The decrease of the estimated Customs and Excise Revenue 1917-1918, as compared with the previous year, is £1,976,441. The reduction below the amount received in 1915-1916 is £3,304,103.

Direct Taxation. Until the year 1910-1911, the Commonwealth had no direct

taxation. The total direct taxation of the Commonwealth now amounts to:—

	Actual. 1915-16.	Actual. 1916-17.	Estimate. 1917-18.
Land Tax (first collected in 1910-11)	£2,040,436 ..	£2,121,847 ..	£2,110,000
Income Tax (first collected in 1915-16)	3,932,775 ..	5,622,026 ..	5,915,000
Special Income Tax, non-participants .. .. .	.. .. .	.. .. .	500,000
Succession Duties (first collected in 1914-15)	626,215 ..	1,062,013 ..	900,000
Entertainments (first collected for half-year in 1916-17) .. .. .	.. .. .	110,686 ..	225,000
War-time Profits Tax (two years 1915-16 and 1916-1917) .. .. .	.. .. .	.. .. .	1,000,000
Total Direct Taxation	£6,599,426 ..	£8,916,572 ..	£10,650,000

The present systems of collecting Commonwealth and State direct taxation are both irritating and expensive. The Government intends to do its utmost to bring about a more satisfactory state of affairs.

A Conference of Commonwealth and State Taxation officers was held in Melbourne in March last. Its report will shortly be made available to members.

The Commonwealth Government proposes to introduce to the House an amending Income Tax Assessment Bill based upon the draft Bill prepared by the Conference. It is hoped and believed that the co-operation of the States will be secured, and that in future taxpayers will be relieved.

It is the intention of the Government to urge the State Governments to adopt the Federal Income Tax Act as their own, and to authorize the Commonwealth Taxation Department to collect the State taxes at rates fixed by the State Governments.

The Conference of officers adopted uniform definitions for "improved value," "value of improvements," and "unimproved value," the definitions agreed upon being those which appear in the Federal Land Tax Assessment Act. Approval by the various Legislatures will enable Federal and State land tax to be levied on common values, settled by one authority.

Transfer of Part of Unexpended London Balances. For some years it has been the practice of the Treasury, when goods are ordered in Great Britain, to set aside money in order to pay for the goods when delivered. The money was transferred from the Consolidated Revenue Fund to the credit of a Trust Account known as the "London Liabilities Account." The

result is that money is carried forward from year to year, because in some cases many months—and even years—elapse between the time when the money is set aside and the time of payment for the goods.

The usual practice is to meet expenditure out of current revenue, and this is followed by the Commonwealth in relation to expenditure within Australia. Under existing circumstances there is neither reason nor necessity for storing up money to meet payments in London long before it is required.

The balance of moneys lying in the "London Liabilities Account" on 31st March, 1917, was £4,591,776, and of this £2,925,291 belonged to the Consolidated Revenue. The proposed transfer to the Consolidated Revenue Fund is £825,355.

Expenditure out of Revenue, not including War. The total expenditure out of Revenue, not including war, is estimated at £24,174,481 in 1917-1918, including £1,257,617 for new works. The actual expenditure last year was £26,526,026, including £4,301,530 for new works.

A more useful comparison may be made by omitting payments to the States, new works, and (for last year) the repayment to the Australian Notes Fund. There will remain what may be called the expenditure on ordinary services, and the position is—

Ordinary Services—			
Estimate 1917-18	..	..	£16,600,614
Actual 1916-17	..	..	15,582,959
Increase	..	..	£1,017,655

This increase may be explained in the following way:—

Increase in Invalid and Old-age Pensions, due partly to the fact that the increase of 6s. a fortnight extended over only nine months of 1916-17 and partly to normal increase			
			£377,151
Increase in Interest on Treasury-bills issued for Works			
			35,005
Increase in Interest payable on Loans raised for States. This increase is wholly set off by an increase in the amount payable by the States to the Commonwealth and included in the Estimates of Revenue			
			297,500
Increases Parliament			
			4,165
Increases Prime Minister's Department			
			31,333
Increases Attorney-General's Department			
			8,595
Increases Military			
			54,403
Increases Navy			
			85,315
Increases Department of Trade and Customs			
			32,016
Remission of duty on sacks, &c.			
			200,000
Increases Postmaster-General's Department			
			227,546
Net result of other increases and decreases			
			4,991
Total increases			
			£1,358,020
Deduct decreases—			
Treasury	£22,479		
Home and Territories	130,363		
Works and Railways	187,523		
			340,365
Total increase as before stated			
			£1,017,655

Every member of the Ministry is fully alive, not only to the necessity of keeping within the Departmental Estimates, but also to the obligation not to incur any expenditure that can without injury be avoided.

It is not intended to deal in detail with the expenditure at this stage. That will be done by the Minister when the Estimates of each Department are being dealt with in Committee. It may, however, be said that while as much economy as is reasonable has been exercised, it has not been considered advisable to sacrifice efficiency or to act inconsiderately towards the employees of the Government.

War Expenditure out of Revenue. The expenditure out of revenue upon the war has been:—

	£
1914-15	540,217
1915-16	3,778,378
1916-17	8,406,970
Estimate, 1917-18	13,109,351
	£25,834,916

The estimated war expenditure from revenue for 1917-18 may be compared with the expenditure last year in the following way:—

	Actual. 1916-17.	Estimate: 1917-18.
Interest	£4,820,926	£7,689,940
Sinking Fund	1,167,127	771,260
Detained Enemy Vessels (set off by earnings of £1,259,569 in 1916-17 and Estimate of £1,600,000 in 1917-18)		
	674,565	1,000,000
War Pensions (including Administration)		
	1,185,907	2,687,168
Repatriation of Soldiers		
		1,000,000
Other Services		
	558,445	10,983
	£8,406,970	£13,109,351

An increase of £4,702,381.

In 1916-17, the annual payment into Sinking Fund was at the rate of 1 per cent., but it has been decided, for the year 1917-18, to adhere to $\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., which is the rate mentioned in the Commonwealth Inscribed Stock Act. The whole question of the Sinking Fund requires to be placed on an improved foundation.

War Expenditure out of Loan and Revenue. The war expenditure out of loan has been:—

	£
1914-15	14,471,118
1915-16	37,423,568
1916-17	53,099,841
Estimate, 1917-18 ..	84,051,230
	<hr/>
	189,045,757
Add expenditure out of revenue	25,834,916
	<hr/>
	214,880,673
Deduct contributions to War Loan Sinking Fund ..	2,139,164
	<hr/>
Total expenditure on account of the war ..	212,741,509

Included in the estimate of expenditure out of loan in 1917-18 is an amount of £26,000,000, which is due to the British Government. Most of the expenditure on the Australian Imperial Force is made direct by the Australian Government, but in addition very heavy expenditure is made by the British Government, principally for the maintenance of the troops at the Front, and the supply to them of munitions. The estimated expenditure by the British Government in respect of the Australian Imperial Force, from the commencement up to 30th June, 1917, was £28,500,000, and up to 30th June, 1918, it is estimated that a further amount of £29,750,000 will be required. The Commonwealth has repaid £5,000,000 up to 30th June, 1917, and since that date is paying £3,500,000 more, at the rate of £500,000 a week. The British Government has been generous in this matter, and has not even suggested that payment should be made; but, of course, it is intended that, as soon as possible, the indebtedness shall be reduced.

The payment to the British Government is dependent upon several contingencies, chiefly relating to the overseas sale of Australian produce, and the raising of sufficient amounts of loan in Australia.

Included in the estimate of expenditure out of War Loan are an amount of £2,850,000 for advances to the States for

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the construction and erection of silos for wheat storage, and an amount of £2,000,000 to be advanced to the States for the purpose of settling returned soldiers on the land. This £2,000,000, and the £1,000,000 to be provided for general repatriation purposes out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund, make, in all, £3,000,000, which it is estimated will be sufficient to meet the expenditure on repatriation during 1917-18.

Expenditure out of Loan for Works. The proposed expenditure for 1917-18 on works to be paid for out of loan may be summarized as follows:—

	£
Naval Bases, Works, and Establishments	630,000
Acetate of Lime Factory	53,403
General Arsenal	200,000
Perth General Post Office, towards cost	45,000
Contribution under River Murray Waters Act 1915	90,000
Commonwealth Railways	676,161
Conduits and laying wires underground	270,811
Construction of Fleet	400,000
Wireless Telegraphy	15,000
Acquisition of land in Federal Capital Territory	114,000
Purchase of sites, other than amounts included above ..	67,450
Lighthouses, lightships, including upkeep of vessels for construction work	50,900
London Offices	100,000
	<hr/>
	2,742,725

The items to be placed on loan amount to a proposed expenditure, for the most part during the current year, of £2,742,725, and are properly chargeable to Loan Funds. Not to proceed with these urgently necessary works would mean a large withdrawal of employment, which should, where possible, be continued, as otherwise existing difficulties would be accentuated. By avoiding increased taxation as far as possible, and the curtailment of employment resulting from taxation, wealth production will be encouraged.

Federal Capital. The amounts provided in respect of the Federal Capital are as follow:—

	Actual. 1916-17.	Estimate. 1917-18.
Water Supply, Sewage Disposal, Transport, Power, Fencing, Orchards, Forests, Educational Services, Nurseries, Rabbit Destruction, Hospital, Inspection of Properties, and Watchmen are estimated to cost .. ..	.. ..	£14,400
Salaries of Director of Design and Construction, and seven clerks .. ..	.. ..	2,573
Technical and Clerical Staffs, Canberra and Melbourne .. ..	.. ..	2,450
Special Investigations .. ..	.. ..	1,300
Road Maintenance .. ..	.. ..	2,750
Other items .. ..	.. ..	1,527
Sundry Preservative Works .. ..	.. ..	11,000
Railway, completion of Construction line, &c. .. ..	.. ..	8,300
Works generally	£116,969	.. ..
Working expenses—Queanbeyan-Canberra Railway .. ..	.. ..	1,423
Total Works and Maintenance	£116,969	£45,723
Purchase of Land—		
In Federal Capital Territory	£111,859	£114,000
Outside Federal Capital Territory	8,865	1,500
Total for Land	120,724	115,500
Total Works and Maintenance, also Land	£237,693	£161,223

All the expenditure in 1916-17 was made from revenue, and, for 1917-18, land and construction of railway, amounting in all to £123,800, have been placed upon loan.

Northern Territory. The estimated expenditure on the Northern Territory in 1917-18 may be compared with the actual expenditure in 1916-17 as follows:—

	Actual. 1916-17.	Estimate. 1917-18.
Interest	£146,186	£143,073
Ordinary Expenditure	195,225	189,349
Additions, New Works	54,166	35,020
Capital Expenditure on Railways (chargeable to Loan in 1917-18)	117,859	45,861
Total Expenditure Northern Territory	£513,436	£413,303

“Australia House,” London. The erection of the Commonwealth Offices in London, known as “Australia House,” is now approaching completion. The site was purchased in the year 1911-12, and, since then, the building has been steadily proceeded with. The total amount expended up to the 30th June, 1917, including £400,000 for the site, was £738,931, of which £617,690 was provided from loan, and £121,241 from revenue. The estimated expenditure for the current year is £100,000, chargeable to loan. It is hoped that this provision

will be sufficient to enable the building to be completed.

Provision is made in the Estimates of the current year for £12,800 to cover upkeep and maintenance, including municipal and other taxes. As a set-off to this expenditure, it is estimated that rents, amounting to £10,000, will be received during the year. Amongst the tenancies already arranged for may be mentioned those of the Agent-General for Victoria and the British Government, who pay rents of £2,200 and £6,275 respectively.

The Commonwealth Government is relieved of the payment which it has hitherto made for rent in London. The amount for the year 1915-16 was £2,960.

Invalid and Old-age Pensions. At 30th June, 1917, there were in the Commonwealth 93,672 old-age pensioners, and 26,781 invalid pensioners—total 120,453—equal in all to approximately 4½ per cent. of the adult population.

The expenditure for 1916-17 was £3,452,849, being an increase of £593,083 over the preceding financial year. This very large increase is due principally to the amendment of the Invalid and Old-age Pensions Act in October last, as a result of which all pensions were increased by 5s. per fortnight. In my financial statement of 14th June last, I estimated the cost of this amendment at £800,000 per annum. The expenditure for 1917-18 is estimated at £3,830,000. Here, again, there is a considerable increase, due chiefly to the fact that the increase in the rate of pensions was operative for only nine months in the last financial year.

As a result of the amending Act of 1916, all inmates of benevolent asylums for whose maintenance the Commonwealth makes payment, are now receiving pensions of 2s. per week. This amount is paid to them personally, or, in some cases, disbursed for their benefit.

The Government proposes to amend the Invalid and Old-age Pensions Act so that war pensions, and payments by the Defence Department to persons by reason of their dependence on members of the Forces, will not interfere with pensions under the Invalid and Old-age Pensions Act.

Maternity Allowances. During the financial year 1916-17, 132,407 maternity allowances were paid, representing an expenditure of £662,035. This was an

increase of 458 allowances compared with the preceding financial year.

War Pensions. The war pensions which are payable in Australia numbered 42,815 on the last day of the financial year 1916-17. The expenditure of that year was £1,149,423. At the end of the preceding financial year, war pensions numbered 8,754, and the expenditure for the year was £129,273. The expenditure for 1917-18 is estimated at £2,600,000.

Arrangements exist with the Governments of New Zealand and South Africa for payment of Commonwealth war pensions in those countries. In other countries outside the Commonwealth payment is made through the Deputy Commissioner of Pensions in London.

Australian Notes Fund. On the 30th July, 1917, the position of the Australian Notes Fund was:—

Sovereigns held by Treasury (equal to 32·68 per cent. of the circulation)	£15,301,971
Loans made to States before the War began	2,634,000
Loans made to States since the War began	18,000,000
Used by Commonwealth for Works, Redemption of Loans, &c.	3,109,163
Used by Commonwealth for War	33,640
Fixed Deposits in Banks	1,701,000
Current Account at Commonwealth Bank	3,701,505
Advanced to Mints for Purchase of Gold	227,000
Total of the Fund	£49,738,279
The foregoing assets were created by:—	
Issuing Notes amounting to	£46,827,382
Earning interest	£3,189,569
Less expenses	278,672
	2,010,897
Total of the Fund	£49,738,279

The amount on current account at the Commonwealth Bank is £3,701,505. This credit has arisen partly by the accumulation of interest, which now amounts to £1,215,996 per annum, and partly to certain gold transactions. The Treasury is considering the question of using this credit balance for the purpose of cancelling an equivalent value of Notes in Circulation.

Loans to States. Loans made to the States before the War out of the Notes Fund, and still outstanding, amount to £2,634,000. These loans are repayable at various dates between 1919 and 1926.

Soon after the outbreak of war, the Commonwealth lent to the States, except Queensland, out of the Notes Fund:—

New South Wales	£7,400,000
Victoria	3,900,000
South Australia	2,600,000
Western Australia	3,100,000
Tasmania	1,000,000
Total	£18,000,000

The money was lent under agreement to repay it two years after it was paid to the States. Subsequently it was agreed to extend the period to three years, and the dates of repayment run between November, 1917, and December, 1918.

On 6th November, 1915, the Commonwealth entered into an agreement with the States (except New South Wales). The agreement includes the following:—

- (a) Commonwealth to be the sole borrower overseas;
- (b) Commonwealth to borrow for State requirements £8,940,000 to 31st December, 1916, and afterwards £7,450,000 per annum till one year after the end of the War;
- (c) States to have the right to borrow in Australia under certain conditions, £3,610,000 for 1916, and £4,332,000 for 1917.

The foregoing arrangements do not apply to renewals by the States of their existing loans. The moneys referred to in the agreement are for ordinary public works, &c., of the States, and are not for the erection of silos, or for the settlement of returned soldiers on the land or for other repatriation purposes. The amount to be advanced to the States, in 1917-18, for erection of silos for wheat storage is £2,850,000, and the amount to be advanced for purposes of settling returned soldiers on the land is £2,000,000.

At the Premiers' Conference in January, 1917, the agreement of 6th November, 1915, was modified as follows:—

The Commonwealth to borrow for the States	£5,400,000 instead of £7,450,000 for 1917	£5,400,000
The States were at liberty to raise in Australia under certain conditions		£4,332,000
Total for 1917		£9,732,000

In pursuance of the agreement of 6th November, 1915, the Commonwealth in June, 1916, raised £4,000,000 for the States in London at 5½ per cent., the price obtained being par. The loan is redeemable in 1920-22. In April, 1917, the Commonwealth raised another loan of £3,500,000 in London for the States. The price of issue was 98, and the rate of interest 5½ per cent. per annum. This loan is redeemable in 1922-27. The Imperial Government agreed that the Commonwealth might make further advances

to the States, totalling £3,000,000, out of War Funds supplied by the British Government, in anticipation of the issue of a further loan for the States, out of which the advances will be repaid to the War Funds. The States have already been paid their proportions of this £3,000,000. The amount of £3,000,000 was paid to the States as follows:—

Balance of £8,940,000 agreed to be raised for 1916	£1,440,000
Towards £5,400,000 due for 1917	1,560,000
	<hr/> £3,000,000

The summary of amounts lent by or through the Commonwealth to the States is:—

Lent out of Notes Fund, to be repaid at various dates between 1919 and 1926	£2,634,000
Lent out of Notes Fund, to be repaid in 1917 and 1918	18,000,000
The Commonwealth has raised for the States, in London—	
To be repaid in 1920-22	4,000,000
To be repaid in 1922-27	3,500,000
The Commonwealth has advanced to the States out of moneys lent to the Commonwealth by the British Government for war	3,000,000
	<hr/>
Total loans to States by or through the Commonwealth for the purpose of the ordinary public works of the States	£31,134,000
To be advanced out of war loans in 1917-18 for silos	2,850,000
To be advanced out of war loans in 1917-18 for settlement of returned soldiers on the land	2,000,000
	<hr/>
Total loaned or to be loaned to States	£35,984,000

The foregoing does not include what will be loaned to the States in 1917-18 in respect of their ordinary public works.

The Commonwealth hopes to be able to raise the £6,840,000 required by the States for this calendar year, being £3,840,000 still due to the States and £3,000,000 to recoup to War Loan the amount already advanced. The obligation of the States to repay the £18,000,000 is definite, and, as it is desired to vary that obligation, the agreement of 6th November, 1915, might well be reconsidered as regards payments beyond this calendar year. The Government is anxious to work in the closest harmony with the Governments of the States in this matter, and feels sure mutually satisfactory arrangements will be made.

Loans to be Raised for War Purposes.

On 30th June last the balance of war loan moneys unexpended was	£17,745,163
The instalments yet to be received in respect of the fourth war loan issued in February last amount to	6,187,668
	<hr/>
Total loan moneys in hand or in sight at 30th June, 1917	£23,932,831
	<hr/>
The estimated expenditure out of war loan in 1917-18 is	£84,051,230
Deduct loan moneys in hand or in sight as above	23,932,831
	<hr/>
Add amount which probably would be in hand on 30th June, 1918	3,947,523
	<hr/>
Total loans which apparently must be raised in 1917-18	£64,065,922

Every effort will be made to raise this money in Australia, and the Government will find it necessary to issue a new War Loan at an early date.

Ordinary Inscribed Stock and Treasury Bonds will be sold at convenient times as in the past, and, in addition, the Government desires to encourage systematic saving by the people of the Commonwealth, with a view to assisting in financing the war. War Savings Certificates and War Savings Stamps are accordingly being issued under a scheme which provides facilities for the investment of sums from 6d. to £875. Several denominations of certificates are issued, and in each case the purchase money is repaid at the end of three years, together with compound interest at the rate of $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. per annum.

Whilst the 6d. and 2s. 6d. War Savings Stamps provide a means for setting aside small amounts for investment in certificates, the Government particularly desires to encourage the formation of War Savings Groups. These groups arrange for payment of subscriptions at regular intervals, and for immediately investing the moneys in certificates. Good results are secured under the group system of saving, because of the regularity of the payments expected of the members, and the force of example which every member exerts upon the rest.

The Government has recently appointed committees of representative men to conduct the War Savings Campaign throughout the Commonwealth. All classes are

invited to take part in this campaign, and to assist the movement in every way possible.

Public Debt of the Commonwealth. The Public Debt of the Commonwealth at 30th June, 1917, was £169,177,767. This amount includes subscriptions to the Fourth War Loan, the due date of some of which has not yet been reached.

The Public Debt is made up as under—

War Loans—			
War Loans raised in Commonwealth ..	£80,190,720		
War Loans from Government of United Kingdom ..	47,774,269		
Total War Loans ..		£127,964,989	
Other Public Debt—			
Loans raised in London for the States for Public Works—			
June, 1916 ..	£4,000,000		
April, 1917 ..	3,500,000		
		7,500,000	
Loans for Commonwealth Works, Land, Loan Redemption, &c., namely:—			
From Notes Fund ..	£8,109,163		
From Sinking Funds ..	299,010		
From Trust Fund ..	609,370		
		9,017,543	
Balance of Northern Territory Loans taken over from State ..		2,772,516	
Balance of Port Augusta to Oodnadatta Railway Loans ..		1,759,003	
Value of Properties transferred from States ..		10,789,739	
Accrued Deferred Pay, Australian Imperial Force, to 30th June, 1917 ..		9,373,977	
Total Public Debt at 30th June, 1917 ..	£169,177,767		

There was owing to the British Government at 30th June, 1917, in respect of the maintenance of Australian Forces at the Front, an amount estimated at £23,500,000. As against this, however, the Commonwealth had in hand, at the same date, £17,745,163 of war loan moneys, and there was a further amount of £6,187,668 still to be received by the Commonwealth on account of the fourth war loan. The public debt of £169,177,767, previously shown, includes these amounts of £17,745,163 and £6,187,668.

The following are particulars of the war loans raised in the Commonwealth:—

1st issue ..	£13,389,440
2nd issue ..	21,655,680
3rd issue ..	23,587,420
4th issue (not fully paid) ..	21,421,070

Total amount raised ..	£80,053,610
Less amount of stock and bonds repurchased and cancelled ..	598,890

Amount of stock and bonds outstanding ..	£79,454,720
War savings certificates, up to 30th June, 1917 ..	736,000
	£80,190,720

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The following are details of the war loans from the Government of the United Kingdom:—

Date of Maturity.	Issue Price.	Rate of Interest.	Proceeds received by Commonwealth.	Indebtedness of Commonwealth.
1925 to 1928 ..	95 ..	3½ ..	£1,200,000 ..	£1,263,158
1925 to 1945 ..	99 ..	4½ ..	20,900,000 ..	21,111,111
Not yet fixed ..	100 ..	5 ..	25,400,000 ..	25,400,000
			£47,500,000 ..	£47,774,269

There is parliamentary authority to borrow £2,000,000 more from the Imperial Government, which has agreed to lend the amount.

The total amount authorized to be raised in the Commonwealth for war purposes is £88,000,000. Of this amount £80,053,610 had been raised at 30th June, 1917, by the issue of stock and bonds, and £736,000 by the issue of war savings certificates. The balance authorized to be raised is £7,210,390.

At the 28th July, the amount received from the sale of war savings certificates had increased to £1,349,285.

The stock and bonds issued in Australia, still outstanding and amounting to £79,454,720, bear interest at the rate of 4½ per cent. per annum, and are redeemable on 15th December, 1925.

On the closing of the accounts for 1916-17 the financial position was found to be much better than had been anticipated. Instead of the small surplus of £126,886, the credit balance was £2,102,177. Moreover, the interest payments during 1917-18 will not be so large as expected, because the Treasury hope to raise loan moneys in such a manner that the balances unexpended will be much less than they have been in the past. During the year 1916-17, owing principally to the fact that payments due to the British Government were deferred, the cash to the credit of the Treasury, including money lent for short periods in London and Australia, was greatly in excess of immediate requirements, as the following figures show:—

	£
Cash, 30th June, 1916 ..	22,981,921
Cash, 30th September, 1916 ..	28,293,947
Cash, 31st December, 1916 ..	24,720,001
Cash, 31st March, 1917 ..	37,705,902
Cash, 30th June, 1917 ..	29,435,421

Offsetting the above, throughout the year, there were overdrafts in the Commonwealth Bank varying between £1,025,000 and £2,250,000. These overdrafts were not necessitated by lack of

funds, but were convenient for the payment of accounts, and no interest was paid by the Commonwealth on the overdrafts.

New Taxation. New taxation proposals by the Government are—

1. The war-time profits tax, estimated to produce £1,000,000 for the two years 1915-16 and 1916-17.

2. An additional income tax to the amount of 10 per cent. of the taxable income (with a minimum of £10 in each case) on single men and widowers without children, between the ages of 21 and 45 years of age, who have not enlisted in the Australian Imperial Force. This tax is estimated to produce £500,000 during 1917-18, and will be used as part of the £1,000,000 provided on the Estimates from the Consolidated Revenue for the repatriation of soldiers. The estimate of £500,000 is not for a full year's tax, but merely that portion which will be received before 30th June next.

Additional taxation would have been necessary but for the surplus brought forward from last year and the transfer of £825,355 in London. I am glad to say that these fortuitous circumstances have made it possible to avoid this year a large increase of taxation. The people of the Commonwealth are already heavily taxed.

From a return furnished by the Commonwealth Statistician, it appears that 84.2 per cent. of the income tax, assessed for 1915-16, which was £4,436,997, is paid by 13,372 persons who have £1,000 a year or more, that 52,491 persons who have £200 and less than £1,000 a year pay 12 per cent., and that 167,853 persons who have less than £200 a year pay 3.8 per cent.

The return shows also that the taxation per head in 1915-16, for Commonwealth and States, including double taxation on land and incomes, &c., was £6 8s. 5d., as compared with £6 6s. 1d. in Great Britain.

As the war proceeds, costing the Commonwealth over £80,000,000 a year, increased taxation will be inevitable, but it will be the endeavour of the Government to ask for the imposition of the necessary increased taxation only when it is actu-

ally required, and to impose it in the way that will be least felt by the people.

During this terrible war a great financial responsibility rests upon the people of Australia. We realize that we are part of a great Empire, and that we are fighting for its integrity and for our national life. We are confronted by foes unparalleled in the world's history for cruelty and barbaric atrocity. We are determined to stand firm and united with our kinsmen in the Old Land, and with our brave Allies, until there is an assured, and, we hope, not distant, victory. We owe everything we possess, including our home on this continent, to the people of the Motherland. We have enjoyed the advantages of peace and security under her care and protection for over a hundred years, and in this day of trial and adversity we are closer to the "Old Land" than we ever were, even in the peaceful and prosperous days of the past.

Progress reported.

BUDGET-PAPERS.

Sir JOHN FORREST.—I lay on the table Budget-papers, prepared for the information of honorable members.

Ordered to be printed.

AUSTRALIAN SOLDIERS' REPATRIATION BILL.

SECOND READING.

Mr. GROOM (Darling Downs—Honorary Minister) [4.35].—I move—

That this Bill be now read a second time. This Bill, entitled "A Bill for an Act to make provision for the Repatriation of Australian Soldiers," provides the machinery for the development and administration of a scheme for the repatriation of our soldiers, and the essence of the measure is really contained in the words of clause 8 as follow:—

Regulations providing for the granting of assistance and benefits to Australian soldiers upon their discharge from service, and to the children of deceased or incapacitated soldiers, &c.

Those words define the scope of the repatriation scheme as outlined by the Bill, but the Minister in charge of repatriation, after consultation with Cabinet, has decided to extend their scope in order that widows with children may come under the general scheme.

This Bill is really an expression on behalf of the community of its sense of obligation to the soldiers who have made untold sacrifices for the preservation of their country and the Empire, and in some way seeks to make a return for the invaluable services that our soldiers have rendered to the nation. Any scheme of repatriation must of necessity be tentative in its nature. No such scheme has been in operation elsewhere, so that there has been no precedent to guide the Government in formulating one. The Bill has been framed so as to be elastic, and in order that it may be adapted to changed conditions that may arise in the future, and which are not present to our mind to-day. The object in view may be put in a few words: It is an organized effort on behalf of the community to adequately care for those returned soldiers who have come back partly or wholly incapacitated through illness or through wounds received at the Front, and to re-establish in civil life on their return from the Front those men who have taken up arms in defence of their country. Using the phrase which has been employed by the Minister in charge of repatriation, a scheme for repatriation must not be regarded in any sense as a mere money scattering proposition; it must be an organized effort to give real and valuable assistance to our returned soldiers. It will also have an economic effect, because it will mean restoring our soldiers to their various civil occupations at the earliest possible moment, so that they may be in an immediate position to take up their part as citizens in the general production of wealth throughout the community.

Under the Australian Soldiers Repatriation Fund Act of 1916 a body of trustees was constituted and empowered to hold certain sums of money, but that scheme was in substance merely a voluntary effort for the collection of funds which were to be held by the trustees, and to be supplemented by Commonwealth grants. Altogether £109,355 was contributed by private effort, and the Commonwealth grant was £250,000.

MR. SAMPSON. — Have those trustees exercised any functions?

MR. GROOM.—It is proposed to abolish the Board of Trustees, and to vest all the funds held by them in the Commission which is to be constituted under

the Bill now before the House. The Commonwealth Government have decided from the experience of the working of the Act that they should take full responsibility for repatriation. They consider that repatriation is a national responsibility, and they are prepared to accept that responsibility.

MR. RODGERS.—No, they do not. They pass it on to the States.

MR. GROOM.—The Commonwealth Government are asking Parliament to accept this Bill, and in doing so to accept full responsibility for the repatriation of our soldiers. No further appeals will be made for contributions to the central fund, but where there is a desire in various localities to supplement what the Commonwealth Government are doing, local committees will still be free to collect and apply moneys as a supplement to whatever is done under the Commonwealth scheme.

MR. LISTER.—In such cases will any reduction be made in the Commonwealth allowance?

MR. GROOM.—No. There will be a general uniform policy, and all allowances will be made under the regulations which will be drawn up. With a view to securing uniformity of action and uniformity of grants as far as is possible under one scheme, it is advisable for the Commonwealth to take the full responsibility and constitute its own agencies, and to administer the grants which will come from Commonwealth sources. Generally speaking, the object of repatriation is to re-establish the soldier in civil life, and in this regard it is important to consider the date at which repatriation should begin, and that at which the responsibility of the Minister administering this Bill will arise. This matter is decided in clause 8, which provides in effect that repatriation will begin from the moment of the discharge of the Australian soldier from the Australian Imperial Force. There are many funds in Australia to-day which are being applied in various ways for the amelioration of soldiers and their dependants, and with a view to securing a definite line of action and uniformity the Minister in charge of repatriation convened a conference of the promoters of these various funds. This conference met and reviewed the whole question from the point of view of amelioration. By "amelioration" I

mean, providing out of voluntary funds grants to soldiers and their dependants from the moment they enter camps up to the date of their return, and from the date of their return to the date of their discharge from the Australian Imperial Force. As a result of the conference a common agreement was arrived at to secure a uniform practice throughout Australia. Three things were agreed upon—uniformity of grants, a common collective agency in each State, and Commonwealth supervision as regards expenditure upon administration. In coming to an agreement as to what the scale of allowances should be, the conference practically adopted the highest scale existing in any State. There are two periods covered by the scale of allowances. The first period is from the date of enlistment to the date of return. The second period is from the date of return of the soldier to his discharge. I have in detail the scales agreed upon. Honorable members will understand that they represent the amount of income which the persons mentioned will draw, made up by the allotments of pay and grants. The scale for the first period, from the date of enlistment to the date of return, is as follows:—

	Per week.
	£ s. d.
Wife	1 10 11
Wife and one child	1 19 9
Wife and two children	2 4 11
Wife and three children	2 7 6
Wife and four children	2 10 2
Wife and five children	2 12 9
Wife and six children	2 15 5
Wife and seven children	2 17 9
Wife and eight children and up-wards	2 19 0

MR. BAMFORD.—Is there any age limit for children?

MR. GROOM.—I am not sure, but I believe that the age limit is sixteen years. These are the cases of grants to the dependants of absent soldiers in order to bring the incomes up to the standards that I have detailed. After the soldier's return another scale operates, and that which has been agreed upon is as follows:—Single men, £2 10s. per week; man and wife, £3 5s. per week; for the first two children an additional 5s. each per week, and for children over two in number 2s. 6d. each per week. The object of the conference was to bring about this uniformity and to provide, as far as funds would permit, for generous and liberal treatment.

So far, I have dealt only with the position of the men up to the date of discharge. I come now to the point at which amelioration ceases and repatriation begins, and it is here that the responsibility of the Commonwealth commences. It will, perhaps, be found advantageous if, in outlining this scheme, I deal with each class of persons who are likely to come under it. Of these there are several. In the first place, it is proposed that the men, before they actually come under the operation of the scheme, shall be registered. At present the position is that a soldier is discharged, receives his pay, and then may or may not apply to a Repatriation Committee for assistance. In some instances, returned soldiers first expend their money and then seek aid. It is not for us, however, to criticise such action on the part of the men who have made big sacrifices for their country. Rather should it be our aim to consider this question solely from the point of view of how we can best help them. The intention of the scheme is to secure registration before discharge, and, if possible, while the men are yet oversea, so as to minimize the time between the discharge and the re-establishment of the soldier in some civil calling or occupation.

MR. LECKIE.—The men who have already returned will, of course, come under this scheme?

MR. GROOM.—Quite so. The desire will be to secure the registration of the men before they are discharged, and, if possible, to have the discharging office and the repatriation office in the one building, so that the two operations may be immediately linked up.

MR. SAMPSON.—The whole matter of administration will be carried out under the one roof?

MR. GROOM.—Yes; and in each State.

SIR ROBERT BEST.—Including the provision of pensions?

MR. GROOM.—The payment of war pensions comes under the jurisdiction of the Treasurer. The point with which we are now concerned is that of keeping in touch with the soldier from the day of his return until he finally comes under the repatriation scheme. An endeavour will be made, at the earliest possible moment, to obtain information as to the men who wish to come under the scheme, the qualifications they possess, and the particular calling which each man desires to follow on his return. That information having

been obtained by the officers and committees concerned, they shall at once be able to apply the scheme to each individual.

It is hoped that a vast proportion of our soldiers will return in good health and vigour ready to resume the civil occupations which they followed before the war. Many men so situated will not desire to come under this scheme, but experience teaches us that some of them will. The hope is that those who are in good health will return to the occupations they followed prior to enlistment. In order to assist them in doing so, or in obtaining other employment, it is proposed to provide for a system of registration for employment, or, in other words, for the establishment of a Bureau of Employment in each State. These bureaux will be linked up with local agencies or committees scattered throughout the rural districts of Australia.

MR. RODGERS.—The Minister does not regard as repatriation work the returning of a man to his old job?

MR. GROOM.—Many men will desire to secure employment at their former avocation, and we must help them to do so.

MR. BAMFORD.—Is this scheme actually in operation now in respect of men who have already returned?

MR. GROOM.—I am at present dealing only with the proposals of the Minister.

MR. PAGE.—As a matter of fact the scheme which the honorable gentleman has outlined is in operation in Queensland today.

MR. GROOM.—That is so. Senator Millen has displayed great energy in dealing with this question, and has availed himself of every possible source of light and guidance. I may say, in passing, that he submitted the scheme to the Senate in a speech that will rank as being among the most notable made in connexion with the war. He formulated for the first time in history a scheme on behalf of a nation—a scheme framed with the intention that the nation should help those who had fought for it, and help them in an organized way. To return to the point I was discussing when interrupted, the Central Bureau of employment will be linked up with country districts. There are already in existence, in several of the States, bureaux established for this purpose, and the Minister has been assured of the hearty co-operation of the State

Governments in carrying out this arrangement, so that unnecessary duplication may be avoided.

The second class to be considered in connexion with repatriation is that of apprentices who enlisted before the completion of their indentures. At the time of their enlistment many young men were serving their apprenticeship to various trades, and those apprenticeships have been broken. Some two or three years may elapse between the date of their enlistment and the time of their return. Meantime, they will have lost their training, and consequently, although they will have advanced in years, their earning capacity will not be what it would have been had they remained at home and completed their indentures. It is not fair that these young men should be compelled to work for the wages they were earning at the time of their enlistment, and this is a responsibility of which the Minister has not lost sight. The object will be to enable them to complete their apprenticeship, the Repatriation Commission supplementing their wages to allow this to be done. Where Government employment can be provided to enable them to complete their apprenticeship it will be given; but where that is not possible, an effort will be made to induce private firms to provide for them. In other words, they will be asked to take over and complete the broken indentures, the Commission subsidizing the wages as far as may be necessary. Where it is impossible for these young men to complete their training under either Government or private employment, there may be on the part of the Commonwealth an obligation to consider the creation of special training establishments. The question of the remuneration of these young men is one of importance. An apprentice may have enlisted at eighteen years of age and may not return until he is twenty-one, with the result that, the wage of a man of eighteen is not adequate for the man of twenty-one. The intention of the scheme is not to allow such a loss to fall on the men, but as far as possible, to place them in the position that they would have occupied, so far as the rates of wages are concerned, had they remained at home and completed their indentures.

MR. TUDOR.—What will be the position of a man who had passed the examinations

for the Public Service, but was not called up prior to his enlistment?

Mr. GROOM.—Such men will be dealt with under the Public Service Bill, which provides for preference of employment to returned soldiers.

Mr. LAIRD SMITH. — They will not be asked to undergo a further examination?

Mr. GROOM.—We may well leave the consideration of that question until the Public Service Bill is before us. The intention of the Government is that returned soldiers shall receive preference of employment, and my own personal view is that the rights of those who, before leaving for the Front, qualified for the Public Service should be preserved.

Mr. FENTON.—Will they be required to undergo a further medical examination?

Mr. GROOM.—A regulation dealing with that question has been framed. But I fear Mr. Speaker will not allow me to discuss that matter on the measure now before us.

I come now to another phase of this repatriation scheme, and one of the most important. I refer to land settlement. The States, as honorable members are aware, have jurisdiction over the lands of the Commonwealth; and, in order that this aspect of the question might be dealt with, a special conference of representatives of each of the States was called to develop a definite policy. The matter was discussed at length, and five of the six States agreed to a definite plan. Shortly put, the agreement is that the States who own the lands shall provide the lands for this scheme, and that the Commonwealth shall advance to the States the money necessary to enable a grant not exceeding £500 to be made to each settler, for the purpose of improving his holding and providing plant, stock, and other essentials to his success.

Mr. RODGERS.—Will that advance also be made in respect of private lands on which returned soldiers have settled?

Mr. GROOM.—I am dealing now only with the arrangements actually made with the States.

Mr. CORSER.—What will be the position if one State fails to come under this arrangement?

Mr. GROOM.—I trust that all the States will realize, just as we do, that the well-being of the returned soldiers should be our first consideration, and that all

will come into line in respect of this agreement.

Mr. FINLAYSON.—What State is standing out?

Mr. GROOM.—A difficulty has arisen with regard to Queensland.

Mr. SAMPSON.—In regard to the question of land settlement, will the Commonwealth continue to hold control over the administration of this part of the scheme?

Mr. GROOM.—The Commonwealth will certainly retain some control over it with respect to finance. A special Board, consisting of a Minister from each State and a Commonwealth Minister, and to be known as the Soldiers' Settlement Board of Australia, is to be constituted.

Mr. RODGERS.—Will that Board also deal with the question of the suitability of the land?

Mr. GROOM.—No. The States who own the land will have control of their own policy in each case.

Mr. RODGERS.—Will the Commonwealth have no voice in the selection of the land?

Mr. GROOM.—The selection of the land will rest with the State; but there will be co-operation as between the States and the Commonwealth.

Mr. HEITMANN.—Has the question of providing money for the repurchase of alienated estates been discussed?

Mr. GROOM.—As to that, no decision has yet been arrived at. The Minister desires to get into touch with the States, and to secure, as far as possible, the establishment of small settlements. The amount to be advanced in each case is not in itself sufficient to enable large areas of land to be dealt with. Where a man already has land, this advance of £500 will be made to him; but the intention is to establish smaller settlement schemes rather than attempt to deal with large areas.

Mr. SPENCE.—Small settlements on good land?

Mr. GROOM.—Closer settlement on suitable land, so that a speedy return may be obtained from its occupation. In connexion with these small settlements, there should be organized effort to bring about the working of certain industries on co-operative lines, the Government guaranteeing a market and organizing the handling and sale of the products.

Under this scheme, it is proposed to establish training farms, the losses upon which will be borne equally by the Commonwealth and the States. In regard to other occupations which returned soldiers may desire to follow, the regulations will provide for them, but it is obvious that something will have to be done for returned soldiers who have been discharged, and who are awaiting employment, and in this connexion the Minister proposes a scheme of reserve employment. One suggestion which has been made is that forestry should be encouraged in Australia, so that during this period of waiting their services may be utilized in that direction. There has also been under consideration the question of furnishing men with employment on the works to be undertaken by the River Murray Waters Commission, and the Minister is now communicating with the States concerned with two objects in view—first, the employment of returned soldiers on those works, and, secondly, their settlement upon the lands embraced within that scheme.

I have now dealt with those men who are in possession of all their faculties, and who are healthy and strong. I wish now to direct attention to two other classes—those who are partially incapacitated and those who are totally incapacitated. Both deserve the most sympathetic treatment that we can extend to them, and this scheme has been framed with that object in view. In this connexion it is intended to establish in our hospitals what are known as curative workshops—that is to say, workshops in which light employment will be provided for those who are partially incapacitated. Such work will prove healthful to them, and will furnish them with a certain amount of preliminary training. By arrangement with the Minister for Defence, two of these workshops are to be established immediately, one in Sydney and the other in Melbourne, but it is intended to extend them, as circumstances require, throughout Australia. These workshops can be operated even before returned soldiers are discharged, and, as a matter of fact, will be utilized before the men come under the repatriation scheme.

Mr. BAMFORD.—The workshops, I presume, will deal with different trades.

Mr. GROOM.—It is only elementary training which will be provided in them. They are primarily intended to train

the men in the use of artificial limbs, and to interest them. When the men are discharged, they will require further training. But by that time they will have been granted pensions, and will be in a better position to utilize whatever faculties they may possess in an endeavour to supplement their incomes. It will, of course, be necessary to provide also for advanced training for those who are partially incapacitated. [It has been suggested that we might establish special institutions for this purpose, but it has been thought better to endeavour to make an arrangement with manufacturers under which these returned and partially incapacitated soldiers will be permitted to enter factories and mingle with their fellow men there.]

Mr. BAMFORD.—There will be a strike over that.

Mr. GROOM.—The Ministry is hopeful of being able to make an arrangement with the unions and employers which will bring about the result I have indicated. I think it will be found that the unions are humane in this matter. We believe that they will endeavour to assist their fellow-citizens, who have fought and suffered for them, to obtain some means of supplementing their incomes. In the case of the permanently incapacitated, we are faced with an entirely different problem. These men are to be provided with suitable homes, and where they desire to remain with their own relatives, it is proposed to supplement their pensions so as to enable them to receive nursing attention.

Mr. ORCHARD.—When a partially incapacitated man becomes expert enough to supplement his pension, will that pension be reduced?

Mr. GROOM.—No. I will, however, deal with that phase of the matter presently. The Minister has suggested tentatively that the allowance to be granted to a permanently incapacitated soldier for nursing attendance shall be 10s. per week.

I now come to another class with which we shall have to deal, namely, those who are affected with tubercular disease. In their case, it is intended to provide proper sanatoria in which they shall be given every attention. Still another aspect of repatriation involves the supply of necessary artificial limbs. It is proposed to establish in Australia a factory for the purpose of manufacturing these limbs.

At the present time, we are making arrangements for their importation. But it is intended to establish a factory for their manufacture here, and we are now obtaining the necessary experts for the purpose. It is not merely the provision of these artificial limbs that we have to consider, but also their maintenance.

Mr. PAGE.—They should be taught the use of the limbs.

Mr. GROOM.—That has been provided for in the earlier part of the scheme. As a matter of fact, such instruction is already being given in the military hospitals.

In regard to pensions, it is only right that there should be some definite decision given in respect to them, and for obvious reasons. When a returned soldier knows definitely the amount of his pension, he will naturally feel a sense of security, and will endeavour to supplement it to the full extent of his capacity. After he has overcome the defects inseparable from the use of artificial limbs, and gained a victory, he ought not to be deprived of the fruits of that victory. Consequently it is proposed that after the lapse of six months his pension shall be fixed finally, and that it shall not afterwards be liable to any reduction. But should a man subsequently develop further defects from injuries arising out of the war, we intend to allow his pension to be reviewed with the idea of increasing it. But I wish honorable members to understand that there can be no review of it for the purpose of decreasing it.

I have now given a general outline of the scheme, and I may add that the Minister has stated that the proposals embodied in this Bill are to be considered of a more or less tentative character. As we have had no experience of repatriation, he will welcome suggestions with a view to improving the measure.

Mr. LAIRD SMITH.—This is not a party question.

Mr. FINLAYSON.—Who suggested that it was?

Mr. GROOM.—Nobody.

Mr. FINLAYSON.—Then why make the statement?

Mr. GROOM.—The general principle of the Bill embodies Governmental responsibility for this scheme of repatriation. As I have already pointed out, the obligation ought to be a national one, and in order to give effect to it, there should be Ministerial responsibility for the development

of the scheme and for its administration throughout the Commonwealth. It follows therefore that there must be a Minister placed in control of it, and accordingly it is intended to introduce a Bill to constitute a Minister for Repatriation. He will be in charge of a Department. He will have under him a chief executive officer of the Commonwealth, and a chief executive officer in each of the States. They, in turn, will have under them the necessary officials to give effect to the scheme. It will be admitted, I think, that throughout Australia during the war, there has been a wonderful exhibition of capable management by persons who have voluntarily given their services to assist our returned soldiers, and who have helped in connexion with the movements on behalf of soldiers and their dependants. In these circumstances, it has been considered advisable to frame a scheme which, while preserving Ministerial responsibility and that official control which will insure uniformity, precision, and exactness, and while insuring adequate supervision in the distribution of the funds, will invite the hearty co-operation of voluntary workers. With this object in view, it is intended to constitute a Central Commission consisting of seven persons, including the Minister. These persons will be appointed by the Governor-General, and two out of the six members whom he will appoint are to be returned soldiers. The Commission will be a body corporate, capable of holding property of its own. It will have intrusted to it the power of recommending to the Government regulations for giving effect to this scheme. It will consider questions of policy, the nature of the grants which shall be made, the area over which they shall apply, and the conditions governing those grants. All these matters will be set out in regulations to be submitted to the Governor-General for enactment. The Commission will also be a Board of Appeal. Any soldier who may be dissatisfied with the decision of a State Board may appeal to the Central Commission.

Sir ROBERT BEST.—Even in regard to land matters?

Mr. GROOM.—The States have jurisdiction in land matters, but an appeal may be made in regard to any matter coming within the regulations and the

jurisdiction of the Central Commission. What we desire is the harmonious co-operation of Governmental agencies, in order that the best possible result may be secured. The determinations of the Commission upon appeals are to be final. The Commission is also to act as a Board of Advice.

Mr. PAGE.—To whom?

Mr. GROOM.—To the Minister, who will be its chairman.

Mr. TUDOR.—Who will be the remaining members of the Commission?

Mr. GROOM.—They will be appointed by the Government, and two of them will be returned soldiers.

There will also be State Boards, constituted by seven members, two of whom will be returned soldiers.

Mr. LISTER.—Will the positions all be honorary?

Mr. GROOM.—Yes. The State Boards will act under the regulations which will be framed. In this way we hope to secure uniformity.

Mr. PAGE.—Who will be the paid official?

Mr. GROOM.—An executive officer will be appointed for each State.

Mr. PAGE.—Will he be a Commonwealth officer?

Mr. GROOM.—Yes; and a paid official.

Mr. ORCHARD.—Will the returned soldiers be paid?

Mr. GROOM.—All the members of the State Boards, like the members of the Central Commission, will act in an honorary capacity. The State Boards will consider such applications as may be made to them by returned soldiers, and, as I have said, from their decisions there will be an appeal to the Central Commission.

There will also be Local Committees, who will do important work under the State Boards.

Mr. RODGERS.—Will their members be elective or nominee?

Mr. GROOM.—That has to be determined. The State Boards will consider, among other things, the granting of money to returned soldiers, and the Local Committees will see to the proper application of the grants within their respective districts. They will thus act as the agents and delegates of the State Boards. They will assist in questions of employment, and will be free to raise funds locally to supplement the grants made in their districts.

Mr. FINLAYSON.—Will they have any power of suggestion?

Mr. GROOM.—There will be nothing to prevent Local Committees from making suggestions to the State Boards, or the State Boards from making suggestions to the Central Commission. At the beginning there are sure to be difficulties which must be referred to the Central Commission.

Mr. TUDOR.—These references will receive consideration, and that will be the end of them.

Mr. GROOM.—Perhaps the honorable member speaks from his attitude on past occasions. It is thought that the Local Committees will be in touch with the men themselves, and that thus the scheme will be carried out sympathetically.

Mr. FENTON.—What will be the jurisdiction of Local Committees?

Mr. GROOM.—It is impossible to say now what will be the areas within which the Local Committees will operate. We cannot adopt the municipal divisions, because they are often too limited in area. The intention is to define such areas as may best secure efficiency.

Mr. CORSER.—Will the Local Committees be allowed to act without reference to the State Boards?

Mr. GROOM.—It will be for them to carry out the decisions of the State Boards in regard to grants; they will not be able to deal with applications for money.

Mr. RODGERS.—Then they will soon get tired of their job.

Mr. GROOM.—I do not think so. I believe that that is the way in which the repatriation work is now being done in Queensland. Only by making grants from a common centre under common regulations can we get uniformity and just treatment.

Mr. MANIFOLD.—Will a Local Committee be able under the regulations to make a grant?

Mr. GROOM.—No, though it may raise funds to supplement any grant.

Mr. FINLAYSON.—It will have full control over money raised locally.

Mr. GROOM.—Yes.

Mr. PAGE.—That will not be much.

Mr. GROOM.—Certain districts have been very generous in this matter.

It is impossible to say at this juncture what repatriation will cost the Commonwealth. We do not know how long the war will last, nor do we know how many returned soldiers will take advantage of

this scheme. But I believe it to be the feeling of the people, that no matter what the cost, within reason, we must foot the bill. Therefore the Treasurer has provided for the advance to the States out of loan money of £2,000,000 to be applied to settling returned soldiers on the land.

Mr. FALKNER. — Is that for buying land?

Mr. GROOM. — No; that is for advances for improvements, stock, plant, and so forth. In addition £1,000,000 is to be provided out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund for general repatriation purposes.

Mr. MACKAY. — The money referred to is to be advanced to the State Governments.

Mr. GROOM. — The £2,000,000 is to be lent by the Commonwealth to the States, and interest is to be paid on it.

Mr. RODGERS. — Are the advances all by way of loan?

Mr. GROOM. — The £2,000,000 will be advanced by way of loan.

Mr. TUDOR. — Are there to be any gifts by the Commonwealth?

Mr. GROOM. — Grants are bound to be made in connexion with a general scheme of this character. This year the Government will provide £3,000,000 for repatriation purposes.

Mr. PAGE. — Let us know definitely how the £2,000,000 is to be regarded.

Mr. GROOM. — The £2,000,000 is to be an advance to the States, to be loaned out by them to returned men, to provide stock, plant, equipment, and improvements.

Mr. FLEMING. — At a fixed rate of interest?

Mr. GROOM. — There has been an agreement with the States regarding the rate of interest. The remaining £1,000,000, for general repatriation purposes, will be taken out of the Consolidated Revenue.

Mr. BAYLEY. — How will it be allocated?

Mr. GROOM. — According to the necessities of the case. If the money is not required it will not be used, and if more money is required, the Minister will have no hesitation in asking the Treasurer for it.

Mr. CORSER. — It will not be possible to apply the money loaned to the State for the building of railways or roads?

Mr. GROOM. — I have stated the purposes to which the money is to be applied.

I have now given in outline the scheme formulated by the Minister in another place and the machinery for carrying it out. This scheme is an earnest of the desire of the Government to give effect to the wishes of the people of Australia. Many of our soldiers relinquished good positions in civil life when they enlisted, and have made great sacrifices for their country. It is felt that the least the Commonwealth can do is to try to replace them in positions as good at least as those which they left. We hope to re-establish our soldiers in civil life so that they may in the future play their part in Commonwealth affairs as well as they could have done had they not gone to the war.

Mr. TUDOR (Yarra) [5.34]. — I move — That the debate be now adjourned.

I hope that the Minister will not bring on this Bill again to-morrow, but will postpone the resumption of the debate to a later day. Let us get on with the War Profits Tax Assessment Bill.

Motion agreed to; debate adjourned.

NATURALIZATION BILL.

SECOND READING.

Mr. GLYNN (Angas—Minister for Home and Territories) [5.35]. — I move—

That this Bill be now read a second time.

The measure does not involve a fundamental alteration of the law of naturalization, and, in order to understand its true import, perhaps I had better make a few observations upon the question of nationality itself. It is rather a delicate subject, and I think that honorable members will be more able than to appreciate what the Imperial position is, and what this Bill for the present contains, if I deal somewhat broadly with the general question.

British nationality depends upon acquisition in various ways. A man may be a British subject by being born within the King's allegiance, which practically means within the limits of the Empire. It does not necessarily mean the Empire, because originally nationality arose out of personal loyalty to the Sovereign, and the limit of the Sovereign's royalty was not circumscribed by the portion over which he must necessarily rule—that is, the British Empire. I may say that protectorates do not come within the territory of the Crown for the purpose of

nationality. It may be acquired also by the fact that a child of a natural-born British subject born abroad is entitled to the position of a natural-born British subject. Then it may be acquired through a certificate or letters of naturalization, or through what are called letters of denization, which was the only method of acquiring nationality prior to 1844. It was a matter, as I have said, of allegiance to the King, and being a prerogative, the only way of acquiring the rights of a British subject except by birth was by getting an express grant under letters of denization from the Sovereign. But, in 1844, the statutory provisions came in, to which I shall make a short reference later. Nationality may also come by marriage with a British subject or through parentage. The law as regards parentage is just a little conflicting, but the position at present in Australia is that an infant whose father obtained a certificate of naturalization, or whose mother, being a widow or divorced, obtained a certificate of naturalization, or whose mother was married to a natural-born British subject or to a person who had obtained letters of naturalization, and who during infancy resided in Australia with his parents, under our Naturalization Act of 1903 was regarded as a British subject. An anomaly arose in connexion with that Act making provision that persons who had obtained certificates of naturalization under State laws should be regarded as naturalized for the purposes of that Act, which I shall refer to later, and which is one of the matters dealt with in this Bill. Then nationality may be conferred through annexation, that is, if a territory is effectively taken over during war; most of them at present are effectively taken by our troops, but they are technically under military occupation. Through annexation, of which one of the chief evidences is a treaty of peace, the persons within that territory change their allegiance and become subjects of the Crown to which the territory is annexed. Then there are in cases some defects. There is the defect of local naturalization. I refer to this matter because an Imperial Act, as I shall show later, was passed in 1914, and an Imperial question as to whether we should not adopt some of its provisions arose, and is still under consideration. The defect of our naturali-

zation is that we can only naturalize within the Commonwealth, so that if a naturalized person leaves the Commonwealth he immediately loses his nationality here; and if, as in some cases occurs, he has lost the nationality of the place of his origin or birth, then he ceases to have any nationality, which under the circumstances of the war, perhaps, is a mixed blessing. He becomes, in fact, an alien again.

Mr. TUDOR.—Do you propose to remedy that?

Mr. GLYNN.—When we adopt the provisions of the Act of 1914, to which I shall refer presently; but this Bill, as I said, does not deal with the continental laws. It does not really adopt the provisions of the Act of 1914 for reasons which I shall touch upon later.

It may be asked what are the privileges conferred by nationality. There is the right to the protection of the Crown against the action of foreign countries, to be tried by British law in Consular Courts, wherever the provision as regards those Courts still holds; if single, and desirous of becoming married, to be married in a foreign country under the Foreign Marriages Act of 1892. There is also the right to hold a share in a British ship, and there are some other matters to which I need not refer. Certain restrictions on the right to hold property which were removed by an Imperial Act of 1870, but some have been restored by the local Legislatures of the States, because some States, such as New South Wales, and, I think, to an extent, Victoria, have passed Acts declaring that aliens cannot hold real property. I believe that Victoria does not even allow a transfer from an alien to take place, which I assure honorable members is rather embarrassing.

Mr. BAMFORD.—Do you say that what are now termed neutral countries naturalize Britishers?

Mr. GLYNN.—I think so. There is no alteration that I know of in the comity on that matter since the war started; but I think such naturalization during war would not affect allegiance to the British Crown.

Mr. RODGERS.—If Victoria erred, it was in following the lead of the Commonwealth. She followed very much our own principle.

Mr. Glynn.

Mr. GLYNN.—I do not quite follow the honorable member.

Mr. RODGERS.—You said that the Commonwealth enacted that aliens should not hold shares, and Victoria said that they should not hold land.

Mr. GLYNN.—I am merely stating a fact, and it is not for me to question the wisdom of the Legislature.

The responsibilities of a British subject include liability to be tried in Consular Courts, and if it is of any interest to honorable members to know, British subjects who commit the offence of treason, murder, or—perhaps I am too personal—bigamy, and certain other offences abroad, have the responsibility of being tried when they get back to British Courts. They may also be extradited under treaties which apply to some countries. I mentioned also that nationality confers the right to the protection of the Crown wherever a subject is. We always hear the saying, "*civis Romanus sum*." I should think that, under the conditions of this war, it has been impressed upon us by the might—developed under extraordinary circumstances, and still in reserve—of the British Empire that to call a person a British citizen has an international significance, which did not attach to the term "*civis Romanus sum*" in the days of Imperial Rome. The protection is given, nevertheless, by courtesy. So that a person naturalized here who goes Home, or even to China, though he is not entitled to many of the statutory privileges of a naturalized person, or to any of them, as a fact, does get, as a matter of the beneficence of British rule, protection from the British flag or British diplomacy.

Mr. FALKINER.—Do you propose in this Bill to naturalize a German when Germany does not recognise naturalization?

Mr. GLYNN.—I shall deal with that matter later. A passport issued by the Foreign Office contains an endorsement stating that it is granted with the qualification that the holder is within the limits of the colony in which he was naturalized, a British colonial subject by naturalization, and is entitled as a matter of courtesy to the general good offices and assistance of His Majesty's representative abroad.

Letters of naturalization, except in some cases where the power exists to confer them by Statute, create only a qualification to acquire rights. A misapprehen-

sion on that point is alleged to have existed in connexion with some of the Imperial Conferences at Home, and it may have retarded the adoption of the Imperial Act of 1914, or of the principles of that Act, which were mooted in some of the Conferences. Except as in sections of our Act, there is an express declaration made by a Statute, naturalization only creates a qualification, so that a person naturalized does not, apart from Statute, become an elector. He becomes qualified to become an elector in accordance with electoral laws. He does not acquire the right to emigrate to Australia in contravention of immigration laws. An alien has no right to land here, whether we passed an Immigration Act or not. Certain British subjects, as well as aliens, cannot land in Australia because we make certain conditions as regards the class of immigrants who are to come here, some being dependent upon colour, and some dependent upon character and other things. An alien cannot land so that, as in the case of *Ah Toy v. Musgrave*, decided, I think, in 1889, when the Chinese Restriction Acts were found ineffective to stop about 265 Chinese who arrived by the *African*, an act of State stopped the coming in of those men, and the Privy Council, on appeal, decided that an alien had no right to land, and could be stopped without the provisions of an Act of Parliament, and that any remedy afterwards was to be obtained through diplomatic intervention. I said that until 1844 naturalization was conferred by Act of Parliament. In 1870 a most important Act was passed, and property restrictions upon aliens were abolished by Imperial law, the intention being to affect the United Kingdom only, though that provision was spoken of as being doubtful. An alien, therefore, can hold property unless there is some statutory provision to the contrary. Previously, by common law, he was disqualified from holding it.

Mr. FINLAYSON.—Whether he was naturalized or not?

Mr. GLYNN.—I mean an alien, of course.

Mr. FINLAYSON.—Who was naturalized?

Mr. GLYNN.—No. An alien can hold property under the Act of 1870. The common law provision was that he was incapable of acquiring or holding property within the Empire, and the Act provided

that the disqualification should not attach to aliens for the future. It also provides that a man can never shake off his nationality, or, if it is more comprehensive in another language—*Nemo protest exuere patriam*. No man can put off his nationality without the permission of the Crown. That principle was modified in 1870, by making provision for renunciation in certain cases, and also for becoming a British subject, where a person for some reason or other has lost his allegiance to the Crown. There was also a provision that, in order to get the certificate of naturalization, there should be five years' residence within the United Kingdom. That was found to be inconvenient to the colonies, because it meant that a man who emigrated after, say, three or four years' residence, lost his residential qualification. He also was obliged to make a declaration, when he had been five years in residence, and applied for a certificate, that he intended to remain. I think that some objections were, or might have been, made by the Dominions on the ground that this had a tendency to interfere with immigration or migration within the Empire. That was one of the reasons which led to a modification of the provisions in the Imperial Act of 1914, which now provides that four of the five years' residence may be within the Dominions, and only one within the United Kingdom itself. The question of uniformity under the Act of 1914, to which those generalities lead me, was discussed in 1901 and in 1907, and again in 1917, by the Imperial War Conference. I myself helped to shape the memorandum that arose out of it, and it was further considered by an Inter-Departmental Conference in 1908. The result of the last Conference on the subject, apart from the War Conference of 1917, was that after a great deal of discussion it was decided that certain principles should be expressed in an Imperial Bill which could be adopted by the Dominions. In effect, the compromise came to was that the term of residence might be made the same, five years; that a person should be of good character, have some knowledge of the English language—which is not required at present—and that he must intend to reside within the Empire, or serve under the Crown. In Part II. of the English measure, which contains a number of modifications of nationality, there are pro-

visions which may be adopted by the Dominions, and under which a certificate holding good throughout the Empire may be granted, subject to local laws. That is the reason I mention that naturalization itself does not confer certain rights, but a qualification for rights; and that principle has been recognised in Part II. of the Imperial Act of 1914, in various provisions to which I had better refer. The resolution passed by the Imperial War Committee was—

The Conference recognises the desirability of securing uniformity of policy and action throughout the Empire with regard to naturalization.

There was a memorandum prepared by the Home Office containing a suggestion that legislative changes shall be made only with the assent of all members of the Empire, and by legislative methods similar to those by which the Act of 1914 was carried; and that separate legislation by any part of the Empire modifying the position in that Act was to be deprecated.

The reason I have not introduced a Bill to adopt Part II. of the Imperial Act is that in consequence of recommendations which were made by the Imperial Government, and adopted by the Imperial War Committee, there may be some fairly drastic alterations of that part of the Imperial Act, and these the Dominions will have to adopt in order to create the power to issue a certificate of naturalization throughout the Empire. I, therefore, thought it better to wait until the communications now passing between the Dominion Governments and the Imperial Government, have been effective in making such amendments acceptable to all. Further, it is possible that the matter may be one of the subjects of an Imperial Conference after the war.

The Imperial Act gives naturalization subject to local laws, and it provides also that there must be a knowledge of English, that children may be included in the certificate—which was not the case up to 1914—that if the husband ceases to be naturalized, nationality may be taken from the wife, or if she is not deprived of her rights as a subject through some special circumstances, she may within six months make a declaration of alienage.

Mr. PAGE. — If a naturalized subject went from Australia to America, and became an American citizen, would his wife and family left here lose their nationality in consequence of his act?

Mr. GLYNN.—Not under the Imperial Act, though the American law contains provisions as to renunciation. There are, of course, special circumstances connected—with treason, for instance—under which the woman's nationality might be taken away. That is merely a power, and under ordinary circumstances the nationality of the wife remains unimpaired, though, as I say, she may make a declaration within six months.

Dr. MALONEY.—In England a woman is not recognized as a citizen.

Mr. GLYNN.—I am happy to say that a woman now stands on a much higher pedestal than that interjection would suggest. Happily, we have not lost some of that primitive idealization which raises a woman to the level to which she is entitled. I speak with much sympathy on this subject, because I was, I think, the first man in the Empire elected by the suffrage of women, which shows that there is more in woman than some people think. That was at a by-election in 1896, after the first Women's Suffrage Act had been passed in Australia, and it restored me to political life as the representative of sanity.

There is a provision in the Imperial Act by which infants lose their nationality when the parents surrender it, unless by losing the British nationality that infant would not become the subject of another State. Such child, on attaining majority, may apply to resume. It is also provided that a British subject, on naturalization in another country, ceases to be British. At present, the law is that a son born abroad of a natural-born British subject is British, and that the son of a naturalized British subject has equal rights.

Mr. FALKINER.—But what if he is a subject under the law of the country he is born in?

Mr. GLYNN.—The infant son loses the nationality on the father losing it.

Mr. FENTON.—If an alien woman marries a British subject in Australia, has she to apply for naturalization papers?

Mr. GLYNN.—She becomes a British subject on marrying a naturalized British subject.

Mr. FENTON.—But a British woman who marries an alien here does not become an alien.

Mr. GLYNN.—Yes; naturalization comes through the husband. The Imperial Act of 1914 is the one that we hope

to adopt after the war. Sir Wilfrid Laurier, at one Imperial Conference in 1911, said—

I think this principle may be laid down to be ultimately reached—a British subject anywhere, a British subject everywhere.

There has been a doubt expressed in Canada as to the effect of the Canadian certificate of naturalization. It was held by some Canadian writers that under section 91 of the British North American Act of 1867 the Canadian certificate was of Empire significance, and that was the opinion expressed by Mr. Ewart, who was, I think, in Australia some time ago. Lord Emmott, in moving the second reading of the Bill in 1914, in the House of Lords, said—

At present an alien naturalized in the United Kingdom carried with him, either by right or by courtesy, over the whole world practically the same privileges as a natural-born British subject.

I do not think that that is the case as regards right, and I mention the matter because it is important to know that, without their consent, the Imperial Act of 1914 cannot, by constitutional practice, be made obligatory on the Dominions. I find from an article in the *Quarterly Review* of the 1st January, 1914, that an opinion to that effect had been expressed by the British authorities some time before the Act became law.

Mr. FINLAYSON.—Was that Act passed before the war broke out?

Mr. GLYNN.—A few days after the war broke out. It had been agreed to at the Conference of 1911, and was ready just before the war.

Mr. PAGE.—How does that affect our Act in regard to Asiatics?

Mr. GLYNN.—It does not touch on that point, but I will read the opinion of the Colonial Department some years ago, in a quotation from an article by Richard Jebb—

The following considerations suggest that naturalization in the United Kingdom has no effect outside its borders:—(1) In a circular despatch of 10th September, 1874, the Colonial Secretary informed the colonial Governments that, as he was advised, "a certificate of naturalization granted under the authority of the Acts of 1844 or 1870 confers upon an alien no rights or privileges in a British colony." (2) The Committee of 1899 state that the authorities are divided in opinion as to whether section 7 of the Act of 1870 confers upon an alien naturalized in the United Kingdom the status of a British subject outside the United Kingdom, either in a foreign country or in a British colony.

So far as the Imperial authorities are concerned, the doubt has been removed by that opinion.

Mr. PAGE.—Will the Bill give that right?

Mr. GLYNN.—No. The British Acts of 1847 and 1870 expressed the right of the colonies to regulate naturalization within the limits of their own territories.

I do not wish to weary honorable members, but there was a case, *Rex v. Albany-street Police Station Superintendent*, in which it was laid down that a child born in a foreign State did not obtain the status of British nationality by the mere fact that the father was a naturalized British subject. In another case, it was laid down by Lord Halsbury—

The right of protection and the obligations of allegiance are necessarily involved in the nationality conferred by naturalization, but the privileges attached to it, where those depend upon residence, are quite independent of nationality.

The Imperial Act contains a provision that we are not to be affected by the Imperial Act as regards local legislation.

Mr. FENTON.—Then Lord Emmott was wrong.

Mr. GLYNN.—He was expressing his opinion of the law at the time he introduced the Bill.

Mr. FENTON.—Is he a legal man?

Mr. GLYNN.—He is an able man, and many have referred to protection by courtesy, but great authorities differed on the point, to which I think it better to refer, however abstruse the subject may be.

Section 26 of the British Nationality and Status of Aliens Act provides that—

Nothing in this Act shall take away or abridge any power vested in, or exercisable by, the Legislature or Government of any British Possession, or affect the operation of any law at present in force which has been passed in the exercise of such a power, or prevent any such Legislature or Government from treating differently different classes of British subjects.

That is the point the honorable member referred to. It is an express declaration that our autonomy in this matter is absolutely unimpaired. The quotation is from the Act of 1914, but, as a matter of fact, provisions, implied if not express, to that effect existed in the Act of 1847 and the Act of 1870. Any doubt on the matter, however, was removed, not only by the opinion I have

referred to, but by the express terms of the Imperial Act I have just quoted. Other parts of the Imperial Act, however, may apply in these Dominions, and may involve, perhaps unconsciously, a modification of the principle that you can never take away or derogate from a grant of self-government; in other words, that you can never, without the request of the particular parts of the Dominions affected, pass legislation to be operative within them, except as purely relating to some Imperial matter or matter affecting only the United Kingdom.

Mr. POYNTON.—Does this Bill remove the embargo that exists now with regard to natives of Mt. Lebanon?

Mr. GLYNN.—No; it does not touch the question. It deals only with the question of acquiring naturalization. The right of entry depends on other Acts.

Mr. POYNTON.—Do you not think they ought to be admitted?

Mr. GLYNN.—I assure the honorable member that they have been treated with more consideration than any other class.

Mr. POYNTON.—But they are not naturalized.

Mr. GLYNN.—We have to keep in touch with the Imperial sense in this matter, and there are reasons relating to their continent of origin why we could not naturalize them. However, so far as we could manage it, the provisions of the Act have not been drastically applied to the natives of Mt. Lebanon.

With regard to double nationality, I mentioned that some amendments were made by the Act of 1870, one by which a renunciation of nationality could be made, and one that a declaration of alienage could be made in certain cases. Westlake, in his *International Law*, says—

Any person who, by reason of his having been born within the Dominions of his Majesty, is a natural-born subject, but who also at the time of his birth became, under the law of any foreign State, a subject of such State, and is still such subject,

may make a declaration of alienage. That was tried since the war broke out; but it was decided, in the case of *Rex v. Officer*, reported in the *Times* of 13th March, 1917, that you cannot, while the war is on, renounce allegiance.

Mr. WEST.—Would a child born of Scotch parents in China have to be naturalized as a British subject?

Mr. GLYNN.—No, being the son of a British subject, he would be a British subject himself. Under the British Act nationality is lost by voluntarily becoming the naturalized subject of a foreign country, and under section 7 of the Act of 1870, if not affected by the Act of 1914, a naturalized person in a foreign country, of which he was formerly a subject, loses it if not released.

There is one inconvenience of the limitation of our power of local naturalization—that there is a disinclination on the part of foreign countries to take action on the question of double nationality; to make provision such as exists between us and the United States of America, for instance, that one nationality goes as soon as the other is acquired. Foreign Governments may object, because any concession that they would get in return might have only a local application in particular parts of the British Dominions, and some of them, therefore, are not inclined to enter into a treaty such as we have had with other countries. The *Quarterly Review*, of 1st January, 1914, pointed out that—

Foreign Governments could not be expected to agree to cancel the allegiance of their emigrant subjects unless the British Government could offer to those settlers a nationality as ubiquitous in intention as that which they would have lost.

Russia will not allow naturalization of her subjects to be recognised without the permission of the Consul. If a Russian is naturalized here, and leaves our shores, he ceases to be a British subject, and was, until recently—I do not know whether it is so under the new Government—liable to certain penalties on his return to Russia for having evaded military service. The *Journal of Comparative Legislation*, vol. xxiii., page 137, states on this point—

The acquisition of a new nationality carries with it, theoretically, at least, the necessity to abandon the original nationality. But it must be stated that all States have not recognised yet that a subject of a State possesses the so-called innate or primordial right to renounce his allegiance. Germany still maintains the permanent character of nationality, even when her subjects have obtained effective nationalization in a foreign country, unless they have been authorized to change their nationality, and thus break the original bonds of allegiance. Allegiance is claimed by Argentina and Venezuela from their citizens, even when they have been naturalized in foreign countries.

This, generally correct, may be affected by German legislation of 1913. The Bill provides, on the question of double nationality, that no certificate is to be issued unless the applicant renounces his other nationality. That may not be thoroughly effective, but in administration there will be additional provisions, including one to get over the difficulty created by the Delbrück (German) Act of 1913. That German nationality law makes the acquisition of a foreign nationality one of the causes of loss of German nationality, but provides, at the same time, that if the person naturalized abroad has, before naturalization, applied for and received the written permission of the competent authorities of his home State to retain his nationality, then his German nationality is not lost. That law provides that a former German—even if he has not returned to Germany—may be granted direct Imperial nationality. It will be provided in administration—and power to make the provision is taken by this Bill—that we may take certain action in the terms of a recommendation made by the Aliens sub-Committee of the Imperial Reconstruction Committee, that if “every German applicant for naturalization is compelled to include in his memorial a statement that he has not applied for or received, and does not intend to apply for, the permission of the authorities of his home State to retain his nationality, then the certificate granted to any such person who does in fact obtain that written permission, will have been obtained by false representations, and can at any time be revoked under Section 7 of the Act of 1914.”

Sir WILLIAM IRVINE.—Is that a sufficient protection? Ought he not to get some certificate from his own Government that his allegiance to that Government is completely sundered?

Mr. GLYNN.—I quite agree with the honorable member that that would be the most effective protection, and it is for that reason that I referred to the fact that foreign Governments are disinclined, in some cases, owing to local naturalization not being effective, to enter into treaties.

Sir WILLIAM IRVINE.—Ought he not, before he can even apply for naturalization here, to produce evidence that his allegiance to his own country is completely severed?

Mr. GLYNN.—He may not be able to do that.

Mr. FALKINER.—What are you going to do to him under your Bill if he does not?

Mr. GLYNN.—We are not necessarily giving a right to naturalization. There are very few naturalized now, because naturalization is granted only in special cases that would lead to some difficulty, which, I am sure, honorable members would agree ought to be removed. I am dealing simply with the right to apply for naturalization. No right to get naturalization is conferred. That is a matter absolutely in the discretion of the Governor-General, and whether a certificate is granted or not rests with the Minister administering the Act. The German Act of 1870, I think, made provision—I have not seen it for two or three years—that a German could get his nationality revoked, and certificates are issued to show that he has done so. The reason was that America required a person to have got rid of his nationality of origin before he could become a naturalized American.

Mr. PAGE.—Why cannot we do the same?

Mr. GLYNN.—If the House wishes to go that length it can be done.

Mr. FINLAYSON.—What objections are there to it?

Mr. GLYNN.—I have gone as far as I possibly can at present. I have dealt with some matters that do not seem to relate directly to the Bill, because I desired to lead up to an apprehension of the Imperial position. I do not like to make an alteration of substance that the Imperial Government have not yet made, and as to which Imperial views may differ.

Mr. CORSER.—How would it affect those who have purchased land, and who have not yet got titles?

Mr. GLYNN.—There are many cases of hardship created.

Mr. CORSER.—Governments have even made advances to these people.

Mr. GLYNN.—I have to consider matters of that kind as Minister administering the law under which people are naturalized. The honorable member for Brisbane asked me just now what objections there are. I think on the whole that it is better to wait until we see what drastic amendments, if any, will be made by the Imperial authorities. They have not dealt even in the Act of 1914 with the question of double nationality, and I am putting in provisions which are not in the Imperial measure.

Mr. TUDOR.—Was not that Act passed before the war?

Mr. GLYNN.—No, it was passed in August, 1914.

Mr. TUDOR.—They had not felt the effects then.

Mr. GLYNN.—I quite agree, and some opinions have been expressed that the Imperial authorities when they passed that Act were not quite conscious of the position.

Mr. FENTON.—If a German is naturalized here, do you say that denaturalizes him so far as his own country is concerned?

Mr. GLYNN.—That is the law of Germany, unless under the Delbrück Act he signs with the consul of his country a request to be permitted to retain the nationality that otherwise he would have lost. We are going to oblige him, by Act of Parliament, to renounce his nationality if he applies. In addition, he will make a declaration in the terms of the recommendation of the Aliens Subcommittee of the Imperial Reconstruction Committee which I quoted just now. I was trying to point out that the reason I have not gone the full length of declaring that there must be evidence that a man has lost his nationality of origin before he can acquire ours, was that the Imperial Act does not make that provision, and that communications are now passing between us and the Imperial Government which may lead to our introducing a full and comprehensive measure making provision for Empire naturalization, and making such other amendments as may be agreed upon between the Imperial Government and the Commonwealth.

We shall also oblige all future applicants for naturalization to advertise their intention to apply, and that will afford opportunities to others to make recommendations against naturalization. The applicant must read and write English. In administration more conditions have been attached to naturalization than applied before the war; but, as a matter of Statute, only one certificate of character is obligatory, namely, from a justice of the peace, a police magistrate, a State-school teacher, or a police officer. The Bill provides for three certificates of character by three natural-born British

subjects, two of whom must be householders and the other a justice of the peace, police magistrate, State-school teacher, or police officer. In addition, the oath of allegiance must be taken after naturalization is approved.

Mr. PAGE.—Why not provide that the certificate of character shall be by freeholders, instead of by householders?

Mr. GLYNN.—A person might have a lease for 99 years, which is almost equivalent to a freehold. Section 3 of the Act of 1903 provides that a person who had, before the passing of that Act, obtained a certificate of naturalization from a State, or a colony which had become a State, shall be deemed to be naturalized. The effect of that provision is that, in some States, persons become naturalized under the Act, and in other States they do not. A person must have become naturalized under a certificate of naturalization, but a person might be a British subject through marriage, or by reason of being an infant of a parent who became naturalized. Section 3 does not validate such naturalization if conferred under a State Act. That disability is removed by a re-draft of the section. In some States, such as New South Wales, the naturalization of the parent carries with it the naturalization of the child, but that is not the case in South Australia. The Act provides that an infant whose father or mother, after widowhood or divorce, took out letters of naturalization, shall become naturalized, but if the mother's naturalization was effected through marriage the infant would not be naturalized. The Bill remedies that state of affairs. I may here remark that some amendments on the draft of the Bill are still under consideration. I have not had time to circulate them to-day, but I will do so as soon as possible. There may be a doubt as to whether we should deal with a measure such as this now, or defer it till a later period.

Sir WILLIAM IRVINE.—We can do so little now; would it not be better to wait?

Mr. GLYNN.—I introduced the Bill in deference to the opinion that we should have some provision against dual nationality. We are taking precautions in administrative practice, but I thought it would be better to have a rule enforced

by Act of Parliament. I merely mention that the provision in regard to infants is open for discussion, and if honorable members are opposed to it I shall not press it.

Mr. FINLAYSON.—Would not your administrative power be sufficient without this Act?

Mr. GLYNN.—Undoubtedly it would in regard to some of the provisions. As a matter of fact, I could confer the opportunity of renunciation by administrative act, but in deference to Parliament, which has done so much in the way of procedure for naturalization, I thought that any substantial change ought to have the sanction of an Act of Parliament. For instance, here is a matter that requires to be dealt with by Statute. Under the present law we have power to revoke letters of naturalization only when they have been obtained by fraud. The Bill confers a general power of revocation, and in war time that may be very necessary. The Imperial Government are considering amendments in the same direction. But I find that they intend to confer power of revocation only for specific causes. I think the clause in the Bill is more effective than the British provision. However, whatever power is to be given in this regard must be conferred by Statute. Grants of naturalization will be advertised so that the public may be aware, from moment to moment, of what is taking place.

Mr. TUDOR.—In what publication will they be advertised?

Mr. GLYNN.—In the Commonwealth Government Gazette.

Mr. PAGE.—You might as well advertise them in the *War Cry*.

Mr. GLYNN.—I think honorable members of Parliament who are interested in the matter on behalf of the public will read the *Gazette*. At present no fee is charged for naturalization, but I propose to make provision for some fee to be charged. I do not think I need say more at this stage on the general scope of the measure. On a recent Sunday, after an interval of about thirty-five years, I again read Curran's speech in defence of Hamilton Rohan, and if I can recall one of its passages, it may serve as a quasi-peroration to a rather obscure exposition of the Bill. Curran's remarks show that some of the men who have stood

out most boldly in the matter of emancipation were men like Curran and Grattan, who were born in Ireland. Curran said—

I speak in the spirit of the British law, which makes liberty commensurate with and inseparable from British soil; which proclaims even to the stranger and sojourner, the moment he sets foot upon British earth, that the ground on which he treads is holy, and consecrated by the genius of universal emancipation. No matter in what language his doom may have been pronounced; no matter what complexion, incompatible with freedom, an Indian or an African sun may have burnt upon him; no matter in what disastrous battle his liberty may have been cloven down; no matter with what solemnities he may have been devoted upon the altar of slavery; the first moment he touches the sacred soil of Britain, the altar and the god sink together in the dust; his soul walks abroad in her own majesty; his body swells beyond the measure of his chains, that burst from around him; and he stands redeemed, regenerated, and disenthralled, by the irresistible genius of universal emancipation.

I merely wish to add that one of the sources of the moral strength of the British people in the present war, has been the perhaps ultra-generosity with which we have treated other nations.

Sitting suspended from 6.30 to 7.45 p.m.

Mr. TUDOR (Yarra) [7.45].—I do not intend to ask the Minister to postpone consideration of this Bill, though I am not sure it is wise to go on with a measure of this description until we have learned what action the Imperial Government propose to take on the general question of naturalization. Apparently the Government have come down with this as one of their Win-the-war measures, though I fail to see how it will bring the war to a successful termination a moment earlier than if it had not been introduced. It appears to be one of the "stop-gap" Bills, brought in to engage the attention of honorable members while the Government are making up their minds with regard to the more important and serious matters, such as the War-time Profits Tax Assessment Bill, on the business paper, and in the discussion of which this House could be very well engaged. I followed the Minister's explanation of the Bill as well as I was able, and I could not help thinking that he was not expounding the principles of the Bill so much as engaged in dealing with the general question of naturalization. He did not explain the difference between this

measure and the Act on our statute-book, and I regret that the usual memoranda were not prepared to show the effect of amendments proposed in the existing law.

The first alteration I notice is the repeal of section 6 of the principal Act, and the insertion in clause 4 of revised provisions concerning evidence to be given in support of applications for naturalization, including an advertisement of intention to apply for a certificate of naturalization. I asked, by interjection, if it were intended that the advertisement should appear in the *Government Gazette*, as I do not think the general public would then be very much the wiser.

Mr. GLYNN.—It does not mean an advertisement in the *Government Gazette*. I was referring to advertisements in the ordinary papers.

Mr. TUDOR. — The provision, then, will make the matter of obtaining letters of naturalization rather more difficult than hitherto. When we passed the principal Act in 1903, shortly after the termination of the South African war, we rather prided ourselves, I think, on the fact that we were making naturalization as easy as possible. All honorable members who were in the first Parliament of the Commonwealth will remember how we approached the debate on this subject then.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—We dropped the usual fee.

Mr. TUDOR. — Yes; the fee usually charged in other countries was abolished in our principal Act.

Mr. McWILLIAMS.—You must remember that the provision as to the reading and writing of English would be a bar.

Mr. TUDOR.—I am aware of that. When I was working in the United States of America some years ago, I know that a large number of people came over from Europe, and became naturalized. They thought no more of it than of writing a letter. One day I asked a man, when he came back to work, what happened, and he replied—"An old bloke sat at the other side of the table, and repeated a whole lot of stuff to me, and said 'Queen Victoria' and 'President of the United States,' put up your right hand—one dollar." That was his idea of swearing allegiance to the President of the United States of America, and forswearing his allegiance to Queen Victoria. I presume that in the

Bill before us it is intended to tighten up the provisions of our existing law.

Mr. GLYNN.—Yes, that is so.

Mr. TUDOR.—The intention, I take it, is to make it more difficult for a foreigner by charging a fee, and then requiring the applicant to advertise his intention to apply for naturalization papers.

Mr. GLYNN.—And to cure some anomalies in the present law.

Mr. TUDOR.—I do not know if the interjection by the honorable member for Flinders, that we should wait until the Imperial Parliament has legislated on this subject, has any weight, but I understand that, after the war, there will have to be general legislation on this and other subjects of a similar nature. If, however, the Minister says the measure is essential for the removal of some anomalies in our naturalization law, I will not offer any objection.

In clause 5 I notice a provision that the Governor-General shall not issue the certificate until he has received from the applicant a certificate of a Justice of the High Court or a Judge of a Court of a State, or police, stipendiary, or special magistrate, that the applicant has before him renounced his allegiance to the country of which he was, at the time of his making his application, a subject. I presume this provision is intended to prevent a repetition of what has been happening under the Delbrück law in regard to Germans seeking naturalization. After obtaining their certificate papers many of them went to their Consuls, and by entering into certain bonds were able to hold citizenship both of the country in which they were naturalized and of Germany. It seems to me that if they had been accustomed to do that in the past they cannot be trusted not to do it in the future.

Mr. GLYNN.—There is no doubt we may not be able absolutely to prevent them, but they must make a declaration before they get a certificate of naturalization.

Mr. TUDOR.—The other point that has engaged my attention is contained in clause 6, which repeals section 10 of the principal Act, dealing with children of naturalized persons, and practically re-enacts the same section with an alteration providing that any person not being a natural-born British subject, and who has at any time "during infancy" resided in Australia with his father or

mother, shall be deemed to be naturalized in the Commonwealth. Sub-clauses *a* and *b* are practically the same as in section 10, and, so far as I can gather, the only alteration in the section is the insertion of the words "during infancy."

Mr. GLYNN. — There are different words, but they had the same effect.

Mr. TUDOR.—It might be necessary to define what "infancy" is. I am quite willing that the Minister should have the Bill passed, but I regret that we are unable to go on with those other measures which we were told are urgent as part of the Government's programme. It seems to me that this Bill is a commentary on the declaration of the Government that they were prepared to go on with legislation for winning the war. Instead of doing that they have brought down this Bill, the object of which is to set right one or two anomalies in our naturalization legislation.

Mr. ARCHIBALD (Hindmarsh) [7.56]. —I rather regret that the Government have brought the measure down, as the Minister admitted that he had the power to do all that was necessary by administration. I gather, from what the Minister said, that for a long time the Imperial Government has discussed with Dominion conferences this question of a uniform naturalization law throughout the Empire, but with the important reservation that the British authorities did not desire in any way, either directly or indirectly, to interfere with the legislation of the Commonwealth or any other Parliament in the self-governing portions of the Empire. It is sometimes suggested that there is an inclination in London to override our political institutions, but there never was any ground for such a base and infamous statement. Naturalization in Australia in pre-war times was as free as the air. I do not know whether both political parties desired to get as many votes as possible, but as far as I can gather, there has never been any difficulty in the way of foreigners, including Greeks, getting naturalization papers. That is a very undesirable state of affairs. It has always been repugnant to me, as an Australian by adoption, that we have been so ready to barter away our political rights as Britishers, and when we are making an alteration in our naturalization laws we ought to bear this in mind. I do not want to speak dogmatically on this

subject—I think it is just as well that this matter should be well debated by honorable members before final judgment is passed upon it—but it always struck me that we made a very great mistake as Australians in allowing any foreigners to become naturalized while they still regarded themselves as subjects of the country which they were supposed to renounce. A man cannot be a Frenchman and an Australian at the same time. I asked the Minister what was the naturalization law of France at the present time, and to my great surprise my honorable and learned friend did not seem to know.

Mr. GLYNN.—I have read it, but the law has been altered three or four times recently, and I did not wish to make an inaccurate statement concerning it.

Mr. ARCHIBALD.—I have always assumed that the honorable and learned gentleman knows nearly everything, and that is why I was so much surprised that he did not appear to know this. My attention was called to this matter not very long ago, and I think that I may say that under the laws of France and Italy, as well as of the other European States, we may naturalize citizens of those countries all day long if we please, but the Governments of those countries will not recognise their naturalization here. The law of France goes, I think, a step further. I know it was stated not long ago that some eminent military men in the American Army, because they happened to be of French descent, might, under the French naturalization law, be compelled to serve in the French Army if they visited that country. I can mention a case that came under my personal observation to show that the Italian law has some bearing upon the ownership of property. I am acquainted with a young Italian who was naturalized here under our free system. Some of his brothers and sisters are native-born Australians. He was himself born in Italy, and some time ago he went back to Italy to join the Italian Navy. He served in that navy for three years and then returned to South Australia, where he now resides. I saw him before he went to Italy and asked him why he did not join the English Navy or the Australian Navy since he belonged to us. He replied that if he did not return to Italy and join the Italian Navy certain property belonging to the family would be forfeited.

The Minister made reference to the stringency of the Russian law, but I doubt if it is any more stringent than those of other European countries. So far as the naturalization of Germans is concerned, I suppose that no Britisher or Australian would in future take the word or the oath of a German who was prepared to swear that he would no longer be a subject of the German Empire. We can leave the naturalization of Germans and Austrians out of the question, but it is still undesirable to deal with this matter at the present time. I suggest that the Government would do well to withdraw this measure until after the war. No doubt, the question with which it deals will, after the war, come up for consideration at conferences at which Australia will be represented, and some basic law on the subject of naturalization will be laid down. When the Imperial authorities have agreed upon the principles of a basic law dealing with the question, it will be time enough for us to take up the consideration of it. I confess that at this juncture it gives me no pleasure to criticise the provisions of the French law. It serves no good purpose at this time to mark the differences that exist between ourselves and our Allies on the subject of naturalization. I do not wish it to be inferred that I think that the present Government of France would seek to unduly interfere with Frenchmen or persons of French descent who have been naturalized here. The only point I wish to make is that they apparently claim the power to do so under their own naturalization law.

I think that we should refuse to naturalize any foreigner unless the authorities of the nation to which he belongs admit his right to renounce his allegiance to it. I understood the Minister to say that he has already the powers he asks for under this Bill, except that it is proposed that every applicant for naturalization must now find three persons to certify to his character. Under the War Precautions Act the Government are able to prevent the naturalization of any persons whom they think should not be naturalized in the interests of the community. If we were living in normal times, there might be some justification for the introduction of this measure, but these are not normal times, and as the Government have the extreme powers they require, and which, in my opinion, they have so far used with

great judgment and wisdom, I think they may be safely allowed to continue the exercise of those powers and postpone the consideration of this question. If they think that the Bill should be gone on with, I shall give them my support as usual, but I prefer that it should be withdrawn, because the present is not an opportune time to deal with the subject of naturalization. It is admitted that the amendment of the naturalization law is held in suspense in the Old Country at present, and we should do no harm to hold it in suspense here until after the war.

Mr. FINLAYSON (Brisbane) [8.10].—The experience of the last three years has amply demonstrated that the necessity will arise for the revision of our naturalization laws. But I am entirely of the opinion that this is not the time to revise them. While the excitement of the war is upon us, and we have, certainly with good reason, a distorted view of the people of enemy countries, we are not in a proper frame of mind to view dispassionately the responsibilities of citizenship as applied to the people of either enemy, allied, or neutral countries. We have an undoubted partiality and friendly feeling towards the people of Russia, France, and Italy at the present time. Conversely we have, and quite naturally and properly, in view of the experience of the last three years, a hateful and unfriendly opinion of our enemies. But a very few years prior to the war our attitude towards our present enemies was just as friendly as it now is towards our Allies. Who will say that not long after the war we shall not be saying of the people of Russia, Italy, and France just what we now are saying of the Germans? I am anxious that we should be as fair as it is possible for us to be, even in war time, even to those opposed to us.

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—We can alter our law—if that should appear to be necessary later.

Mr. FINLAYSON.—Quite so, and for that reason I suggest that the consideration of this measure should be delayed until normal conditions are resumed. From the Australian point of view, the citizen of one country is as good or as bad as the citizen of another, and if we postpone the consideration of this question until the war is over, we shall be able to approach it with some judicial fairness. I listened

most carefully to the second-reading speech of the Minister for Home and Territories, and it gave me the impression that the Bill deals with a question of a highly technical character, more suitable for discussion by the legal than by the lay mind. One cannot but sympathize with the idea that, as far as possible, the naturalization laws of the various parts of the Empire should follow upon generally similar lines. It is satisfactory to know that our local autonomy will not be in the least imperilled by any Imperial Act which may be passed.

The Minister admitted that this Bill covered only a few anomalies, and that he has now a reserve of administrative power that enables him to deal with all these anomalies. In the circumstances I confess that I would much prefer to leave the administration of the naturalization law in the hands of the Minister, with the autocratic powers which he now possesses, than to pass this Bill at this time to correct a few anomalies. Prior to the war, with very little questioning, we freely granted naturalization to all Europeans, and on the whole I do not think that our liberality in this connexion was greatly abused. The trouble we are in to-day is that the German and Austrian nations, whilst they allow their citizens to secure naturalization in other countries, do not relieve them of their citizen responsibilities to their own countries. It is the double nationality which has thus been brought about that is the cause of much of our trouble. The Russians are no better in that respect than are the Germans, and the honorable member for Hindmarsh has said that the French law is no better than the German law. It is within my own experience that during the present war the Russian Consul has demanded that Russians, naturalized citizens of this country, should go back to Russia to undertake military service there. He even went the length of asking employers of these Russians to dismiss them from their employment, so that he might be able to force them back to Russia to fight for that country. Either the naturalization of a Russian in Australia gives him Australian rights or it does not.

The ordinary layman entertains the view that once a man becomes naturalized, then, no matter from what country he comes, he is an Australian citizen, with all the

rights, privileges, and protection guaranteed to Australian citizens. We have discovered, in an unfortunately lurid way, however, that many of the Germans who have settled in our country are still pledged to allegiance to their mother country, while at the same time they are pledged to give allegiance to Australia and its Government. We have to admit that very many of the Germans settled here have been excellent citizens, although a proportion of them have found the ties of blood-kinship stronger than those of their adopted citizenship in Australia. Obviously, such a position as that created when Germans, pledged to allegiance to this country, are pledged still to owe allegiance to their own country, cannot be tolerated. And to the extent that this Bill provides that men must appear before a Justice to renounce their allegiance to their original Government before they can be naturalized here, it is a necessary and proper safeguard.

I am wondering, however, what the future holds out for us in this respect. I want to talk without any special reference to Germans on the one hand or to Russians or French on the other. We have a tremendous tract of country, full of wealth and natural possibilities; but we have to admit that, while the 5,000,000 people of Australia have done remarkably good work, have shown to the world what a virile, healthy, and vigorous people may do, at the present rate of progress we are a long way from effectively occupying and developing the country. We have to obtain more population, and the sooner we get it the better for the future of Australia. Next to the Australian-born citizen, I think it will be admitted that our own kith and kin from the British Isles are the most acceptable immigrants to this country. It is equally obvious, however, that after the war Great Britain will not have so many men available that she will be willing to part with many of them. Whilst we are told in the press that, after the war, the British Government will place no obstacle in the way of families emigrating to British Dominions, we can well understand that, for the sake of the safety and development of the Home Country, they will not offer them any special facilities. Even if they were prepared to do so, the number of emigrants from the British Isles would not mean very much in the aggregate. It would, of course, be of considerable assistance to Australia, but

Mr. Finlayson.

would not help us very much in the big development scheme that we ought to be undertaking. Where then are we to obtain citizens? We have decided that Africans and Asiatics shall not be allowed to come in. We believe that European peoples are suitable for the settlement of this country.

Mr. McWILLIAMS.—But we do not want too many southern Europeans.

Mr. FINLAYSON.—I think some limitation should be placed on the number of southern Europeans entering Australia. The Germans as a whole, apart from their naturalization ideas, which we think are entirely wrong, are much better colonists than are people from southern Europe. That I think has been proved. But there seems to be nothing but danger attaching to the admission of the people of any European country to the rights of Australian citizenship, so long as any authority holds over them allegiance to their Mother Country.

That brings me to the point that we cannot have two classes of citizens in Australia. The people must either be Australians or aliens. We must either assimilate or reject. At present, however, we have in Australia three classes of citizens. We have the honest, naturalized citizen, who is a genuine Australian—who has renounced his native country and takes no cognizance of what is going on there. Then, unfortunately, we have others—too many of them—who profess allegiance to Australia while in their hearts they hold allegiance to the enemy countries from which they come. Thirdly, we have the unnaturalized citizens, for whom I have no respect.

Mr. ATKINSON.—The honorable member must not forget that we have in Australia some people whom the law will not allow to take out naturalization papers.

Mr. FINLAYSON.—I am aware of that. In that connexion there is one class that the Minister might favorably consider. We have here a number of people—mostly elderly—who came from European countries in the early days, and who, while naturalization was dealt with by the State authorities, neglected to take out—or, for some reason, were misled in regard to the securing of—naturalization papers. There are some people who came from Schleswig-Holstein at an historical period.

Mr. McWILLIAMS.—When was that?

Mr. FINLAYSON.—In 1863.

Mr. McWILLIAMS.—Not many of those people are alive to-day.

Mr. FINLAYSON.—I think a good many are still living. They were allowed to come here, to acquire property, and to vote at municipal and State parliamentary elections. From their point of view that seemed practically to make them citizens of this country. Many of them entered municipal councils.

Mr. FENTON.—Some entered the State Parliaments.

Mr. FINLAYSON.—Some of them entered State Parliaments, but after naturalization was taken over by the Commonwealth they discovered that they had failed to take out naturalization papers. Some consideration might well be extended to these people. They were neglectful, no doubt, but were honestly misled by the fact that they were exercising all the rights and privileges of citizenship, although they were without the piece of paper which guaranteed them naturalization. There is at the back of our minds one fact that we cannot forget. We denounce Germany, and rightly so, for her dishonorable conduct in regard to the Belgium treaty. We denounce her for having treated as a mere "scrap of paper" the sacred promise which she, with other nations, gave to Belgium. We need to be careful, however, that we do not fall into the same error. There is in this country too big a tendency to treat as mere scraps of paper, liable to be torn up at any time, our guarantees to people of enemy birth who have become naturalized. We ought to take up an honest attitude.

My feeling is that there should be in our Naturalization Act a provision that, in the event of war between the British Empire and any other country, then people from that country who have been naturalized here shall automatically lose their citizenship rights in Australia until the war is over. Here to-day we are differentiating in a way that is causing a considerable amount of uneasiness, and which is neither correct nor just. There are in Australia some people who hold naturalization papers which guarantee to them the rights of Australian citizenship, and they are exercising those rights and privileges. There are others, however, who have been deprived of them. Any man, whether he be an alien or a naturalized citizen, who is obviously disloyal, or

who can be proved to be disloyal to the King or the country at such a time as this, can have no sympathy extended to him. But it should either be a case of "all in" or "all out." It is impossible to be just in your differentiation. It would be a far more understandable position if we declared in our naturalization laws that where, for any unfortunate reason, the British Empire comes into conflict with any other power, then people who have come from that country, and who hold naturalization papers here, shall automatically lose their citizenship rights while the war is on. That would relieve us of much difficulty, such as we have had during the present war.

On the occasion of the Military Service Referendum, we deprived of the right to vote thousands of Australian citizens against whose loyalty nothing could be said, but who were under suspicion of disloyalty because they had been born in enemy countries. During the last election, there was another deprivation of citizenship rights because these people happened to have been born in enemy countries. If that can be justified—and in some instances it can be absolutely justified—it would be more honest to declare that, whether these people be responsible or not, the call of the blood, the call of country, is the strongest in human nature. If we were in an enemy country to-day, our sympathies would still be with our own country. It would be a shameful thing if they were not. How then, can we complain of these people, who were born in an enemy country, because they have some sympathy with their own land?

Mr. RODGERS.—They have renounced their allegiance to their own country.

Mr. FINLAYSON.—They have not. That is the trouble.

Mr. WEST.—If the honorable member lived in Germany for ten years, he would still be a Scotsman.

Mr. FINLAYSON.—Undoubtedly; and even if I had become a naturalized citizen of that country my loyalty to my own native land would still be the strongest element in me. The only feature of this Bill that seems to me to make it worth while passing is that it provides that every person who, in the future, seeks naturalization in Australia must, in a legal, special, and particular manner, renounce his allegiance to his native country.

I do not suggest that we should close the door too tightly against those who wish to come to Australia. If our naturalization be lightly given it will be just as lightly held. What people obtain easily they value least. I do not suggest that we should slam the door in the face of either Germans on the one hand, or Russians on the other, of either Italians on the one hand or Austrians on the other. But we have every reason to be careful that we do not extend to anybody and everybody in the free and easy fashion of the past, the rights of citizenship. I think there is some reason for making rather more stringent legislative provisions in regard to naturalization than we have made hitherto. If the people of other nations understood clearly that when they came to Australia they could get citizenship rights only by renouncing their allegiance to their own country, and knew that those citizenship rights would be suspended in time of war, they would know exactly where they were, and we would know exactly where we were. At the present time, however, our Naturalization Act seems to be in a sort of "come easy, go easy" position. Then the Bill provides that in the future a fee shall be charged for naturalization.

Dr. MALONEY.—Another shame.

Mr. FINLAYSON.—I do not see what advantage will be conferred by that provision. The Bill does not specify the amount of the fee. It merely says "such fee as is prescribed." Personally, I do not see what advantage will be derived from the charging of a fee. It cannot be made for revenue purposes.

Mr. McWILLIAMS.—It will merely mean paying for the record.

Mr. FINLAYSON.—But persons who desire to take out naturalization papers will necessarily be subjected to disabilities which will involve them in a certain amount of expenditure. I do not suggest that we should adopt the American system of granting naturalization to anybody who is prepared to pay one dollar for the privilege. The Minister did not mention what is the purpose of this fee, nor did he specify its amount. In my judgment, the amount of the fee ought not to be prescribed by regulation. It should be embodied in the Bill.

I do not think that the anomalies which the measure is intended to correct warrant us in tinkering with such an important question as natu-

ralization. The matter is one which is bound to crop up in the near future. Imperial Conferences that have already been held have realized its importance, and the difficulties surrounding it, and we might well have left it to be dealt with by another Imperial Conference. After all, the Australian view of this matter is practically on all fours with the view that is entertained by other British Dominions. We are all practically in the same boat, and what will appeal to one will largely influence the others.

Then I ask the Minister whether any provision has been made for something in the nature of a reciprocal recognition of naturalization rights between the Commonwealth and New Zealand?

Mr. GLYNN.—Not in this Bill.

Mr. FINLAYSON.—Has it been made anywhere?

Mr. GLYNN.—No. That will be dealt with in a larger measure, which I have already drafted. But a communication from Home induced me to proceed with this Bill.

Mr. FINLAYSON.—No doubt the Minister has some inside information on this matter. But I do not think there will be the slightest objection to a mutual recognition between Australia and New Zealand of their naturalization papers and rights. That is one of the things which will tend to draw New Zealand and Australia closer together. Our interests in the Pacific are so mutually advantageous that it seems to me it would be wise for us to cultivate every kind of reciprocal arrangement that is possible with New Zealand, conserving at the same time our own particular interests. I hope that when this matter again comes under review the Minister will consider how far we may meet the other parts of the Empire in a mutual arrangement under which naturalization rights will be uniform throughout.

Mr. BOYD (Henty) [8.37].—It is not often that a naturalization measure comes before Parliament for review, and that an opportunity is presented to honorable members to express the views which they entertain in regard to it.

Mr. MATHEWS.—Another foreigner speaking.

Mr. BOYD.—Nobody would regard the honorable member as a foreigner. He would be branded as a Hottentot. I agree with the honorable member for Brisbane

that the mere act of naturalization will never remove from the man who naturalizes his love of his country or the allegiance which he feels he owes to that country. Now, of all countries in the world, Germany has the most up-to-date and the best naturalization law of its kind, because it says to its citizens, "Before you leave Germany, if you wish to naturalize in another country, you have the opportunity of denaturalizing here." It is about the only country in the world which has a denaturalization law. But when a man has once denaturalized, he is regarded as a foreigner if he returns to Germany.

Mr. FENTON.—Can he not denaturalize again?

Dr. MALONEY.—I understand that he can do so through the Commonwealth.

Mr. BOYD.—The generally accepted law of the nations of Europe is that they own the citizens who leave their country for three generations. The Germans hold that, the French hold it, and the British hold it. As an illustration, let me relate an incident which occurred during the Franco-Prussian war. The French attempted to conscript a Paris solicitor who had never been out of that city and who could not speak a word of English. To all intents and purposes he was a Frenchman. When the authorities endeavoured to put the conscription law into force against him, he said, "I am a British subject." He said it in French. Their answer was, "Your father was born in Paris." "Yes," he replied, "but my grandfather was an Englishman who was not naturalized in France, and the British naturalization law claims me as a British subject." The matter was referred, through the British ambassador, to the British Government, and it declared the man to be a British subject, and, as such, not liable to the French conscription law.

Mr. GLYNN.—The British law has been modified by an Act of 1914, and Britishers living abroad remain Britishers for two generations.

Mr. BOYD.—America, reaching out for population to fill the country, was prepared to admit anybody to citizenship, and the States of Australia have followed American rather than British practice in this matter.

In my opinion the wisest method to adopt would be not to grant naturalization to any foreigner until the nation from which he came had ceased to have a hold on him—that is, not until the fourth generation.

Mr. McWILLIAMS.—Then we could not give votes to those living here.

Mr. BOYD.—What does that matter? The fact that some Germans have had the right to vote in this country since the war broke out has been a curse to it. There should have been no such thing as a "German vote." If Germans wish to exercise the franchise, let them vote in Germany. We might well give foreigners living here the ordinary rights and privileges of citizenship excepting the franchise, allowing them the right to vote only after they have been naturalized, when by the evolution of time, their own country has no longer any claim on them. I have heard it said that Australian-born Germans have acted worse in some cases than naturalized persons born in Germany.

Dr. MALONEY.—I, for one, do not believe it.

Mr. BOYD.—I know of instances.

Dr. MALONEY.—It has not been the rule.

Mr. BOYD.—I would not formulate a rule from my small knowledge of Australian Germans, but I know of cases such as I have referred to, and the honorable gentleman has seen reports in the newspapers showing that some of those born in Australia of German parents have displayed greater antipathy to Great Britain than persons born in Germany. I know of Australian-born Germans of the honorable member's own constituency, who are fighting in the German army against us. No doubt they hope to return to this country when the war is over, thinking that their action will not be known, and that they can resume the rights and privileges of Australian citizenship.

Dr. MALONEY.—Treat them as the Duke of Edinburgh's children should be treated—as traitors.

Mr. BOYD.—When the war is over different ideas will prevail. Our Allies of to-day have been our bitter enemies in the past. No one can foretell the future. But I believe in the good old Scotch precept, "When you are in it, you are in it for all you are worth." The Germans being our enemies to-day, it is our business to get them "down and out" as soon

as we can. We should not allow foreigners to be naturalized too easily. We should fill this country, so far as we can, with people of our own race, so that we may have a homogeneous people. We shall still have our differences, as they have in the home of the race, but our ideals, our standards of life, our hopes and aspirations will be the same. It may take longer to fill the country with our own people than with foreigners, but we shall thereby avoid difficulties such as those with which they are at present beset in America, where you hear of "German-Americans," and there is the fear that a large force may be raised in the country itself to destroy the State. We shall act unwisely if we fill this country with foreigners, having ideals and manners of life quite different from our own.

Dr. MALONEY (Melbourne) [8.48].—I agree with a great deal that has fallen from the lips of the honorable member for Henty. I have, perhaps, more knowledge of Australian-born Germans than any other member. I know that a workman's club has sent many of its young men to fight on our side. No objection was raised against them, because they went as privates. I know another German who tried to make his name rhyme with the glorious Scottish name of Bruce. His real name is Bruche, and he is a man whose word I would not trust. When examined by a Commission consisting of members of this House, he absolutely sought to deceive us.

Mr. McWILLIAMS.—Where is this man now?

Dr. MALONEY.—He, instead of being dismissed, was sent to the Front. On oath he declared that he could not give the name of the house in which he lived, until a young man, who had the misfortune to bear an Irish name, and who had come under the lash of his cowardly cruelty, reminded him. He left Western Australia and went to Adelaide, being wise enough to take a Scotch name. Within a week he was raised from the rank of private. Later he had to return to Western Australia for a rest. The infamy was so great that the Defence Department held an inquiry into the matter. This Bruche is now an officer at the Front, although the Commander-in-Chief has been told that he is of German parentage. I, with others, brought the matter under the notice of

the Minister for Defence. I was simply asked to join the body of gentlemen because I belonged to the then Labour Party, and the satisfaction we got was that the man was withdrawn from the West. When Bruche was in the witness box and young O'Donnell asked him if he remembered the name of the house he lived in, he said "No." "Was it Breslau?" he was asked, and he said "Yes." When he was faced with a description of his office where the young man interviewed him, and where he said that he never saw him, he admitted everything. O'Donnell asked Bruche if he could possibly be in that place without the permission of the officer in charge, and Bruche said "No." "Could I have got in there in the daytime or at night-time?" asked O'Donnell, and Bruche said "No." O'Donnell then said, "Do you know anybody else who has never been in your room and who has described the room as I have?" and Bruche said "No." O'Donnell was there. Luckily he got a chance. I believe that he has received a commission, and gone to the Front, in spite of three German men who were officers there. Who were they? Bruche, Büttner, and Strenke; but, of course, they were officers. Their action recalls that swell German doubledealer who, swearing the oath of naturalization, taking the name of Edwards, and then joining the Automobile Corps, and, I believe, also the Intelligence Department, to learn every road in Victoria in case of need, was allowed to resign from the Army and Navy Club, that club of frills and feathers. He was interned, is allowed £600 a year, and is the "boss cookie," spending the money. Colonel Monash, reaching the rank of Colonel, although never having volunteered for the Boer War, did not ask for him to be expelled from the Army and Navy Club, but he did ask for the expulsion of a man who had the pluck to go to the Cape and fight, and was honored by the British Government with the disposal of over £9,000,000 of money. Of course, he was not a friend of Colonel Monash, Colonel Hughes, nor Colonel Burston. These others are men of high rank. One high officer says that if God spares his life, when he and his mates come over here he will have an inquiry held. Colonel Monash earned the name in Gallipoli of being the "Sand-bag General."

My honorable friend, who has charge of this Bill, has never forgiven the women of this country for being born women.

Mr. GLYNN.—I am very glad that they were.

Dr. MALONEY.—The honorable and learned member does not recognise fully here that a woman is a citizen equally with a man. He is debarring women of the rights which men have—not wilfully on his part, but, if I may say so, through following too closely the example of England, which has always been brutal in her treatment of the weaker sex. A woman is treated in England as only a chattel belonging to man.

HONORABLE MEMBERS.—Oh!

Dr. MALONEY.—I repeat that in England women are only considered fit to be put among criminals and lunatics, and are not allowed to have a vote.

Mr. GLYNN.—They are not admitted to Parliament.

Dr. MALONEY.—I do not think that in England they will admit women to Parliament either; but what can we expect from a franchise which I have dared any member of this House to deny—

Mr. SPEAKER.—Order! I am afraid that the honorable member is wandering from the question before the House.

Dr. MALONEY.—I propose to link up my remarks with the fact that that is how naturalization is not granted there to women in the same way as it is granted to men, and how a woman sacrifices her nationality by marrying a foreigner. I maintain that if an Australian woman honours a foreigner by marrying him, she is a full citizen, and the fact should naturalize him and make him an Australian. Surely if a foreigner is worthy of a good Australian girl's liking and desire, he is good enough to be an Australian, other things being equal? Oh, no! The wife becomes a foreigner, and I resent that fact, as I believe every honest man in our community does. If a woman was unfortunate enough to marry an alien enemy from, say, Germany, she was immediately deprived of her rights and made a German. God never made her a German, but man's law does. This Bill still carries on that infamy. When we reflect that in England only one man out of three is entitled to a vote, we must recognise that the old Roman law making a woman subservient

to man is carried down to its utmost limit.

Time was in Victoria when we used to charge a sovereign to naturalize a person, and then, if he only went over the Murray to New South Wales, he had to become naturalized again. Further, if he went to Queensland, or to New Zealand, he had to be naturalized again. That absurdity I tried to break down in the Legislative Assembly of Victoria, and succeeded so far that we reduced the naturalization-fee from £1 to 2s. 6d., but the naturalization was only good within the confines of our little State. That further absurdity, by the wisdom of the Commonwealth Government, has been abrogated and any foreigner who is naturalized in a State is a full naturalized Australian citizen. I understand that since 1st January, 1915, such persons are entitled to naturalization in Great Britain and Ireland.

Mr. GLYNN.—Who are?

Dr. MALONEY.—Any foreigner who has been naturalized in the Commonwealth.

Mr. GLYNN.—No; but they accept the certificate of naturalization, as we do, as some evidence.

Dr. MALONEY.—And then the holders take out another form?

Mr. GLYNN.—It does not confer naturalization.

Dr. MALONEY.—No; but it enables the holders of that evidence to apply for another paper which gives naturalization to them.

As regards the cost, this statement appears on page 423 of *Whitaker's Almanac*—

An alien may acquire British nationality—

- (a) by special Act of Parliament;
- (b) by the conquest, annexation, or cession of the territory of which he is an inhabitant;
- (c) in the case of a woman, by marriage with a British subject; and
- (d) by naturalization.

* * * * *

The fee payable to the Home Office in respect of the grant of a certificate of naturalization is fixed by the Government of the day, and is at present £3, of which £1 is payable on submission of the application, and the remainder on the grant of the certificate. The £1 payable on submission of the application is not returnable, whether or not a certificate is granted.

N.B.—In the case of a woman who was a British subject previously to her marriage to an alien, and whose husband has died, or whose marriage has been

dissolved, the above requirements, both as to residence and as to fee, are relaxed.

In this community there are both men and women whose forebears, being foreigners and residing in Great Britain and Ireland, were not able to afford the fee of £5 5s. and to become naturalized. Hence during the whole term of their residence they were not able to exercise the full rights of citizenship. Sons came out to Australia, and with the easier justice which our laws gave to them, they wonder sometimes when they write to England and find that members of their family are still foreigners there through the inability of their parents to afford that sum of money. I wish to use that as an argument against the last clause of this Bill, to which the honorable member for Brisbane drew attention. This clause, paragraph *b*, proposes to omit from section 12, sub-section 2, of the original Act, the words, "not be liable to any fee or charge in respect thereof," and to insert in their stead the words, "be charged such fee as is prescribed." Section 12 provides that a person to whom a certificate of naturalization is issued shall not be liable to any fee or charge therefor, and I hope that the Minister will see his way not to press the proposed amendment.

Mr. GLYNN.—It is merely a power that is taken, and it does not follow that any fee will be imposed.

Dr. MALONEY. — If the honorable gentlemen were the permanent head of the Department I should be willing to accept the clause as it stands, but my experience of political life tells me that where our intention is not clearly expressed it frequently happens in a case of this kind, that a charge may be imposed by regulation at the whim of a Minister.

The Naturalization Act that we have at present is a great advance on former legislation, and it has given our citizens fuller rights than are given in any country in the world, save the United States and Switzerland. Further, I hope that we shall hold out the hand of fellowship to New Zealand, and seek for some reciprocity in this matter. I should here like to thank the Minister for, in this connexion, having rendered justice to a man who was placed in a very critical position. In the New Zealand letters of naturalization, the place

of birth of the man or woman is not always shown, and difficulties will arise sometimes that are almost insuperable unless one can obtain the sympathetic help of the Minister in charge. Clause 4 of the Bill provides that a person who was, before the passing of the measure, naturalized in a State, or in a Colony which has become a State, shall be deemed to be naturalized, and I suggest that it would be well to here insert the words "including New Zealand." Whether New Zealand will reciprocate is beside the question. The people of the Dominion come from the same four little Kingdoms, which are holding aloft the standard of liberty in the northern seas, and we could well offer them the clasp of friendship. We all recognise that if the dominion of the Pacific should pass away from the United States and Australia, we should certainly go down, unless the flag of New Zealand were kept flying. The small courtesies of life frequently make existence more endurable and pleasurable, and, with all due deference, I suggest the amendment I have indicated.

The English law is—

In order to be eligible for the grant of such a certificate in the United Kingdom, an alien must—

- (a) during the eight years preceding his application have resided for not less than five years in His Majesty's Dominions (of which not less than one year immediately preceding the application must have been spent in the United Kingdom), or have been for not less than five years in the service of the Crown;
- (b) be of good character and have an adequate knowledge of the English language; and
- (c) intend to reside in His Majesty's Dominions or to enter or continue in the service of the Crown.

I do not see any great objection to the term of five years, but if it be adopted for people from enemy countries, it should be applied only to persons under forty years of age, who have not seen fit to become naturalized. I should certainly not like to see it apply to those who have been here for half a lifetime, and are of advanced years. I hope that if this term is insisted on, a shorter one will be adopted in the case of our Allies, and my own opinion is that two years would be ample for people from the liberty-loving land of France, or our Allies of Russia, Servia, Belgium, Italy, and particularly the United States of America. In the

House of Lords or the House of Commons it was suggested that there should be a system of reciprocity in citizenship between the United States of America and the British Empire, and I certainly hope that the extended term of residence will not be applied in the case of Americans.

Mr. GLYNN.—There are treaties between the British Empire and the United States on the point.

Dr. MALONEY. — Language is the greatest power in the assimilation of discordant factors in a nation. The English language has conquered the four Kingdoms of England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales, and it will absolutely conquer in the United States, even with its great mixture of nationalities.

We should see to it that the German language is not taught in our schools, and in this regard the University of Melbourne is one of the greatest offenders, for there no student can pass the Senior Public Examination in modern languages unless he includes German. It is all very well for professors on the platform to honestly advocate their theories, but why do they not allow students to choose Russian, Italian, or even Japanese, considering that Japan is our ally, and doing splendid work? It is to be hoped that the spread of the German language will not receive the assistance it has in the past.

In conclusion, I hope that the period of residence, and the question of the fees, will be further considered.

Mr. GLYNN.—There are various charges made in the States, ranging from £1 to 2s. 6d.

Dr. MALONEY.—That is so. It was I who was instrumental in having the fee reduced to 2s. 6d. in Victoria, and, as I say, I hope the Minister will give the suggestion I have made his favorable consideration.

Mr. GLYNN (Angas—Minister for Home and Territories) [9.10].—No doubt a good deal of the Bill might be dealt with by administrative act, but there are some clauses that remove anomalies. For instance, a woman may be a British subject in New South Wales but not throughout the Commonwealth, owing to the way section 3 of the Act of 1903 is drafted, and I am removing that anomaly. There is no power, except for fraud, to revoke certificates of naturalization in war

time. It has been considered expedient by the Imperial Government, although they have not amended their own Act yet, and we ought to consider it expedient also, to take power in special circumstances to revoke letters of naturalization. That power is taken by the Bill. I mentioned the precautions that we have taken as regards grants by compelling advertisements to appear in the newspapers, and thus giving generally to persons the opportunity to make representations against naturalization, which will be considered by the Minister before any grant is made.

The main point raised during the discussion was as to the laws of other countries, and I might refer honorable members to what the position really is. The honorable member for Hindmarsh spoke about the French law. This, I think, has been amended on some points since the war, but not on any points pertinent to this debate. I remember that at the beginning of the war a proposal was submitted to the French Parliament to take power to cancel naturalization, but it had a limited application. It applied practically only to men convicted of disloyalty, or criminals. There was a discussion in the French Chamber on the matter of revocation of certificates of persons of enemy origin who preserved their former nationality, but I am not sure whether a Bill was passed or not. It has also been suggested that in some cases a provision such as we are putting in this Bill might be incorporated as regards German nationality; but generally in France if a French subject goes abroad and gets naturalized he loses his French nationality, and that practically is the Continental system. In the last edition of Wheaton's *International Law* it is stated that a Frenchman may, by the law of France, divest himself of his nationality in several ways, amongst which are the following:—(1) By naturalization abroad; (2) by accepting a public office under a foreign Government without permission of his own Government; (3) by accepting military service under a foreign Government without the authorization of his own Government, but here he remains subject to penalties to which he may be liable under French law, while emigration, with a view to evading military service, will also subject the emigrant to penalties if he returns to France within a certain period. France is therefore now

practically in the British position of declaring that where a French subject has become naturalized abroad there cannot be double allegiance. He ceases to owe allegiance to France, but if by leaving and getting naturalized he has evaded the law of military service, he will be liable to military service if they get him within the jurisdiction again.

I looked up the German law three years ago, but the subject includes such a mass of detail that one cannot recall all the little differences. In 1870 Germany passed an Act that a man leaving might get a cancellation of his German nationality. That was the time when there was a recasting of the rules and laws regarding naturalization in some countries of Europe, and it was then that our Act of 1870 was passed. That German Act provided that a man might cancel his nationality on condition that he must get naturalized with some other country within six months. This was probably to enable Germans to become citizens of the United States of America. The United States of America practically provide for what I am providing in this Bill—they oblige a man to renounce his nationality.

Sir ROBERT BEST.—That was the law so far as Germany was concerned. They had not only to renounce their own nationality in Germany, but to be naturalized abroad.

Mr. GLYNN.—I was dealing with the position of German immigrants in the United States of America, because what concerns us is the relation to Germany of men who come from Germany to settle here.

Sir ROBERT BEST.—Do you recollect the recent pronouncement of the German Consul that they never lose their German nationality?

Mr. GLYNN.—I have looked the matter up, and I think I know fairly well what the German law is. I have not only seen some ex-German consuls, but I have known a case in which a man had been dismissed from his nationality.

The United States Act of 1906 provides that a man desiring to be naturalized in the United States of America should "declare on oath, before the clerk of any Court authorized by this Act to naturalize aliens, or his authorized deputy, in the district in which such alien resides, two years at least prior to his

admission, and after he has reached the age of eighteen years, that it is his *bond fide* intention to become a citizen of the United States of America, and to renounce forever all allegiance and fidelity to any foreign Prince, Potentate, State, or Sovereignty, and particularly by name to the Prince, Potentate, State, or Sovereignty of which the alien may at the time be citizen or subject." I have adopted that in this Bill, because we compel a man now, before he can be naturalized here, to renounce his allegiance to a foreign State, but you can never completely cancel his allegiance to a foreign State, except by a treaty arrangement with that State, and we are not in a position to get those treaties made now. I am endeavouring, however, to go as far as I possibly can, and that is the reason this Bill is introduced.

In addition to the renunciation provided by Act, I shall provide by departmental regulation or procedure, that the applicant for naturalization must make a declaration that he is not going to take advantage of such an Act as the Delbruck Act of 1913, under which a German citizen, who may have lost his nationality by dismissal, by absence for ten years from Germany, or by any other reason, may get his nationality restored, and also that he will not attempt to put his name on the consular books to preserve his nationality after he has come here, or before he has left Germany. I have gone as far as constitutional or international procedure will permit to attain the end we desire—that is, to prevent double allegiance being possible here.

Mr. FENTON.—Do not they penalize or ostracize a German in Germany if he goes away from his country and renounces his nationality?

Mr. GLYNN.—There is a provision in the German Act of 1870 which permits that to be done. The British Act of 1914 contains a provision that the moment a man becomes naturalized in another country he loses his British nationality. German legislation provides the same thing, but the Act of 1913 allowed a man to enter his name on the consular books, or in the books of some of the home authorities in Germany, before he felt, to retain his nationality.

Mr. BRENNAN.—Was there not something similar in the British Act?

Mr. GLYNN.—The reason why I went into these somewhat abstruse details of the history of the question is that I might bring honorable members to an understanding of the amendments. The rule in 1870 was that no man could divest himself of his nationality. Once a British subject always a British subject. Britain has been the quickest nation to respond to what are considered the more liberal ideas in regard to naturalization. Germany has been slower, but to some extent has followed our lead by allowing in certain cases the divestment of nationality. According to Wheaton—

German nationality may be lost—by express deprivation for not performing military service; by residing abroad, and failing to return when notified in time of war; by ten years' uninterrupted residence abroad without registering at a German Consulate; by entering the service of a foreign State, and not renouncing it on demand of the home Government.

Sir WILLIAM IRVINE.—But not by naturalization.

Mr. GLYNN.—The Delbruck Act contains that provision. The point is that Germans can preserve their nationality or, under the Delbruck Act, can have it restored.

Sir ROBERT BEST.—There was a provision whereby it was necessary for a German to deliberately renounce his nationality in order to make naturalization effective.

Mr. GLYNN.—Under Germany's previous law, Germans lost their nationality by an absence of ten years, but I think the Delbruck Act was passed to remedy that, and it also contained a provision which enabled naturalized Germans to regain their lost nationality. That is the obnoxious provision.

Sir WILLIAM IRVINE.—Is it not a fact that in the Franco-German war, and in the present war, Germans have been called to the colours after an absence from Germany of more than ten years?

Mr. GLYNN.—I cannot say, but I have shown that in France, although a man, by becoming naturalized abroad, loses his citizenship, he cannot by so doing evade the obligation of the military law. He can be recalled to France.

Sir WILLIAM IRVINE.—After he has lost his nationality?

Mr. GLYNN.—Yes.

Sir WILLIAM IRVINE.—It seems to me that so long as a person owes allegiance in any form to another country it is dangerous to naturalize him.

Mr. GLYNN.—I agree with the honorable member, and I am endeavouring to cure that evil so far as our legislative power will permit, but I cannot get rid of it altogether because we have no jurisdiction, and I say, with all respect, that the Imperial Government has been rather lax in this respect. The Imperial Government has never dealt with the matter of double nationality in an effective way, and, if Parliament passes this Bill, we shall have the most effective law in the British Empire for preventing the restoration of nationality.

Sir WILLIAM IRVINE.—Can you do it effectively?

Mr. GLYNN.—I am proposing to do it as well as it has been done in America. The United States Act actually contains this very provision for renunciation that I am proposing, and I am also providing that we will not grant naturalization, notwithstanding renunciation, unless the applicant makes a declaration which gets rid of the effect of the Delbruck Act.

Sir WILLIAM IRVINE.—But the obligation of the military law will still remain.

Mr. GLYNN.—Although we have not the omnipotence that will enable us to cure an acknowledged evil, it is incumbent on a member of Parliament to do whatever his legislative power will allow him to do in that direction. I think the American legislation of 1906 is a justification for the attitude I take up. I hope there will be no misunderstanding on this point. The limitation of this Bill is not a limitation of desire but a limitation of necessity, because of the absence of power.

I do not wish to weary honorable members by quoting the laws of Europe, but practically the same position obtains throughout Europe, namely, that by naturalization abroad nationality is lost; but conscript nations provide that their subjects cannot by naturalization abroad evade the military law. Britain, with a higher ethical perception, has declared that immediately a British citizen becomes naturalized abroad he loses his nationality and has no further obligation to the British flag. We are not going to hold on to men who are traitors by action, whatever class of men they may be. The British Empire has shown its capacity to fight under the most extreme difficulties

for a noble ideal, and with the most effective application of moral force. That redounds to our credit. Realizing our position in the Empire, I am proposing to go as far as our legislative power will permit to remedy the defects of foreign law. The second reading of this Bill was brought on sooner than I expected, and I have not had time to circulate the modifications I shall propose to two of the clauses.

Sir WILLIAM IRVINE.—If you had been more prepared for the Bill you would have given us a still more elaborate exposition.

Mr. GLYNN.—What I have said was intended to lead up to an elucidation of the Imperial law. I do not regard this Bill as a subject for persiflage, or, in the words of *The Vicar of Wakefield*, as an opportunity for “the ladies to continue the conversation, but not the argument.” In Committee I shall explain the alterations I shall propose to the Bill as drafted.

I should be very glad if I were in a position to introduce a comprehensive Bill adopting the provisions of Part 2 of the Imperial Act of 1914, so as to enable us to issue a certificate that would be valid throughout the Empire, and would be acknowledged, subject to the law of other nations, throughout the world; but at this stage I do not think we should do that, for the reason that communications are passing between the Imperial Government and the Commonwealth Government which may necessitate some amendment of that portion of the Imperial Act which we shall have to adopt to attain that end. But the provisions in the Bill now before us do not to any extent interfere with what the Imperial Government might do in that regard. They are rather an advance in some directions, and for that reason I thought it better to submit the best amending law that is possible in the circumstances.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee:

Clauses 1 and 2 agreed to.

Clause 3 (Persons naturalized in a State deemed to be naturalized).

Dr. MALONEY (Melbourne) [9.31].—I would like to know if there is any objection to accepting a New Zealand naturalization certificate.

Mr. GLYNN (Angas—Minister for Home and Territories) [9.33].—I do not

think it would be wise to make that addition, because the Bill aims at correcting anomalies in our own legislation. When we bring in a more elaborate Bill the evil referred to may be cured. Naturalization throughout the Empire will be conferred when we adopt the Imperial Act. New Zealand naturalization stops at New Zealand, and I do not think we have power to declare it effective in Australia, though there may be doubt on this point. It will be a pity to insert a provision as suggested, in this clause. Our existing law provides that persons naturalized through certificates of naturalization are naturalized for the purposes of our Act of 1903. That is to say, naturalization effected in any of the States is deemed to be effective, but some people were naturalized not under certificates of naturalization, but by marriage, with the result that a woman under the New South Wales naturalization law may be a naturalized British subject in that State, but not in Victoria, unless she became naturalized under our Act. It was to cure that anomaly that this modification was adopted. I ask the honorable member not to introduce any extraneous matter with the object of arranging that naturalization in New Zealand shall be effective here. The conditions in the Dominion are different, and we have no diplomatic arrangements to accomplish the end sought, but as soon as the more comprehensive Bill is brought in, this may be done.

Dr. MALONEY (Melbourne) [9.35].—The difficulty mentioned by the Minister could be overcome by inserting a new clause providing that any one holding naturalization papers for New Zealand should be entitled to receive Commonwealth naturalization papers. Prior to the passing of our principal Act there were different naturalization laws in all the States, with the result that while a man might be a British subject in Victoria, he would be regarded as a foreigner in New South Wales. We wiped that ridiculous anomaly out when we passed our principal Act, and I want now to see reciprocal legislation with regard to New Zealand.

Mr. GLYNN.—I agree that the conditions for the admission of nationality ought to be the same if there is reciprocity, and I assure the honorable member

that when an occasion arises we will do it.

Dr. MALONEY.—I intend to test the feeling of the Committee by moving to insert a new clause at a later stage.

Mr. JENSEN.—If we accept New Zealand naturalization papers, why not the papers of every other British Dominion.

Dr. MALONEY.—The Minister for Customs knows that South Africa is very different from New Zealand. It is not a part of Australasia. I would be perfectly willing to make our legislation reciprocal with that of Fiji also.

Clause agreed to.

Clause 4—

Section 6 of the principal Act is repealed, and the following sections inserted in its stead:—

6. (1) An applicant under paragraph (a) of the preceding section shall produce in support of his application his own statutory declaration stating his name, age, birthplace, occupation, and residence, the length of his residence in Australia, and such other particulars as are prescribed, and that he intends to settle in the Commonwealth.

(2) An applicant under paragraph (b) of the preceding section shall produce in support of his application—

- (a) his certificate or letters of naturalization; and
- (b) his own statutory declaration that he is the person named in the certificate or letters, that he obtained the certificate or letters without any fraud or intentional false statement, that the signature and seal (if any) thereto are, to the best of his knowledge and belief, genuine, and such other particulars as are prescribed, and that he intends to settle in the Commonwealth.

(3) In addition to compliance with the preceding provisions of this section an applicant shall—

- (a) advertise in the manner prescribed his intention to seek naturalization and produce to the Minister newspapers containing copies of the prescribed advertisement;
- (b) produce certificates of character from three natural-born British subjects, two of whom are householders, and one of whom is a justice of the peace, a postmaster, a teacher of a State school, or an officer of police; and
- (c) satisfy the Minister that he is able to read and write English.

6A. (1) Any person may make representations to the Minister with regard to any person who has applied or has advertised his intention to apply for naturalization.

(2) The representations shall be in the form of a statutory declaration.

(3) The contents of any statutory declaration filed with the Minister in pursuance of

this section shall not be disclosed to any person without the consent of the person making the declaration other than for the purpose of a prosecution for perjury.

Mr. TUDOR (Yarra) [9.38].—I should like a statement from the Minister indicating how many newspapers it is proposed that an applicant for naturalization shall advertise in. I have also looked through our Invalid and Old-age Pensions, War Pensions, and Electoral Acts which contain similar provisions concerning officials who may witness certificates to see in what respect this Bill differs from them. When I was Minister for Customs I was permitted to fill up pension forms for people I had known for a number of years, but I was not allowed to witness their signatures, though any officer of the Customs Department was so authorized. An applicant may have no difficulty in obtaining a certificate of character from two householders, but he may not be sufficiently well known to either a justice of the peace, a postmaster, a teacher of a State school, or an officer of the police to expect such a certificate from either of them.

Mr. GLYNN.—In the Electoral Act there is a very long list of persons who may be applied to by those desiring the right to vote.

Mr. TUDOR.—That is so, and I ask the Minister whether he cannot see his way to extend the list of officials or persons to whom an applicant for naturalization may apply in support of his application.

Mr. GLYNN.—The purpose of the list in this Bill is restrictive, whilst the purpose of the list of persons to whom applicants may apply under the Acts referred to by the honorable gentleman is enabling. This provision is taken from the existing Act. I have made the addition of the householders, and all must be natural-born British subjects.

Mr. TUDOR.—I am suggesting that the Minister might see his way to extend this list.

Mr. GLYNN.—We need a special class to identify a person and speak as to his character. The lists of persons referred to in the other Acts mentioned cover those whose only duty is to take a declaration. They are merely witnesses, whilst what is required here are persons who can give a certificate of character.

Mr. TUDOR.—Under the Invalid and Old-age Pensions Act, a member of Parliament may witness the signature of an applicant, and it occurred to me that *bond fide* persons desiring to obtain naturalization should be given a wider opportunity by the extension of the list of persons provided for in this clause to whom they may apply to support their application.

Mr. GLYNN (Angas—Minister for Home and Territories) [9.43].—Under these proposed new sections provision is made for requiring certificates of character in support of an application for naturalization, and these should be supplied by a special class. They will not merely witness a declaration, but will establish identity and certify as to knowledge. I do not think that in the administration of the law any difficulties have arisen as a result of the restriction as to the persons to whom the applicant may appeal in support of his application. I may inform the honorable member for Yarra that, in some cases, men of the highest standing have given certificates of character in the case of a number of applications, which I have still thought it necessary to refuse.

Mr. BRENNAN (Batman) [9.44].—I wish to direct the attention of the Committee to a provision in the proposed new section 6A, which is only too painfully like some of the provisions that have been inserted in our War Precautions Act. It is a provision by which any person may make representations of a secret character against an applicant for naturalization. The proposed new section expressly says that—

(1) Any person may make representations to the Minister with regard to any person who has applied or has advertised his intention to apply for naturalization.

(2) The representations shall be in the form of a statutory declaration.

So far so good, but there is this sub-clause 3 of the proposed new section—

The contents of any statutory declaration filed with the Minister in pursuance of this section shall not be disclosed to any person without the consent of the person making the declaration other than for the purpose of a prosecution for perjury.

It will be seen that the person making the declaration is amply protected, whilst no protection whatever is given to the person against whose character that declaration is secretly directed. I have always opposed, and I hope I shall always continue to do so, the recrudescence of the

systems of the middle ages, in regard to these matters under which a person's character may be secretly impugned. He never knows his detractor, nor what is contained in the document by which he may be injured. This document becomes filed as a permanent record in the public offices, and remains there for all time. No matter what precautions may be taken to secure its secrecy, it may injure an innocent person, whilst it always remains on record against him. That, in my opinion, is most unfair.

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—How can it injure a person if it is only a record?

Mr. BRENNAN.—I ask the right honorable gentleman how he would like to know that, in a public office in this country, for future generations to peruse at their leisure, there was a document containing the gravest statements reflecting upon his personal character, which he would have no opportunity to answer?

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—Naturally, I should not like it. What then?

Mr. BRENNAN.—I say that these statements, which may be communicated to the authorities by the person making them, should also be communicated to the person against whom they are directed.

Mr. GLYNN.—There is something in the honorable member's objection, but we could never administer the Act if we did what he proposes. I have thought the matter over very carefully, and I can assure the honorable member that I can see no way out of the difficulty.

Mr. BRENNAN.—I will content myself by voting against the clause. I never have, in connexion with any of these measures, permitted myself to be associated with any of the methods which I have described as the methods of the middle ages, affecting the rights of citizens of Australia. I cannot associate myself with this proposal affecting the rights of applicants for its citizenship. Men who come here to avail themselves of the protection of the British flag should not be treated in this way. I am opposed to the proposed new section 6A in its present form.

Question—That the clause be agreed to—put. The Committee divided.

Ayes	..	..	..	31
Noes	..	..	..	10
Majority	..	..	..	21

AYES.

Archibald, W. O.
 Boyd, J. A.
 Cook, Joseph
 Corser, E. B. C.
 Falkiner, F. B. S.
 Foster, Richard
 Glynn, P. McM.
 Gregory, H.
 Groom, L. E.
 Hughes, W. M.
 Irvine, Sir William
 Jensen, J. A.
 Leckie, J. W.
 Lister, J. H.
 Livingston, J.
 Lynch, J.

Mackay, G. H.
 Manifold, J. C.
 McWilliams, W. J.
 Orchard, R. B.
 Pigott, H. R. M.
 Poynton, A.
 Rodgers, A. S.
 Sinclair, H.
 Smith, Laird.
 Spence, W. G.
 Story, W. H.
 Webster, W.
 Wise, G. H.
Tellers:
 Greene, W. M.
 Sampson, S.

NOES.

Brennan, Frank
 Considine, M. P.
 Finlayson, W. F.
 Maloney, Dr.
 Mathews, J.
 Tudor, F. G.

Wallace, C.
 Yates, G. E.
Tellers:
 Fenton, J. E.
 Page, J.

PAIRS.

Abbott, General
 Bamford, F. W.
 Bayley, J. G.
 Burchell, R. J.
 Forrest, Sir John
 Fowler, J. M.
 Lamond, H.
 Ryrie, General
 Salmon, Dr. Cart
 Smith, Bruce
 Thomson, John
 Watt, W. A.

Anstey, F.
 Blakeley, A.
 Catts, J. H.
 Charlton, M.
 Higgs, W. G.
 Mahony, W. G.
 McDonald, C.
 McGrath, D. C.
 Nicholls, S. R.
 Riley, E.
 Watkins, D.
 West, J. E.

Question so resolved in the affirmative.

Clause agreed to.

Clause 5 agreed to.

Clause 6—

Section 10 of the principal Act is repealed, and the following section inserted in its stead:—

“10. A person, not being a natural-born British subject—

(a) whose father, or whose mother (being a widow or divorcee) is naturalized; or

(b) whose mother is married to a natural-born British subject, or to a person who is naturalized, and who has at any time during infancy resided in Australia with such father or mother, shall in the Commonwealth be deemed to be naturalized, and have the same rights, powers, and privileges, and be subject to the same obligations as a person who has obtained a certificate of naturalization.”

Mr. GLYNN (Angas—Minister for Home and Territories) [9.55].—I have re-drafted this clause. The clause as it stands provides for children being naturalized through their parents. As I said

earlier in the evening, that was the law in some of the States, such as New South Wales, but not in others, as, for instance, South Australia. Under it, a man thirty years of age, whose father took out a certificate of naturalization, would become naturalized because of that fact. I propose so to amend the clause that it will apply to only such persons as are born of parents who became naturalized during the infancy of such persons. It is a slight modification, and will be more consistent with the object of the Bill. I move—

That all the words after “stead,” line 3, be left out, with a view to insert in lieu thereof the words—

“10. A person (not being a natural-born British subject) —

(a) whose father, or whose mother (being a widow or divorcee) was naturalized under the law of the Commonwealth or of a State; or

(b) whose mother has married a natural-born British subject, or a person who is naturalized under the law of the Commonwealth or of a State,

and who at the time of such naturalization of his father or mother, or of such marriage of his mother, was an infant, and has at any time during infancy resided in Australia with such father or mother, shall in the Commonwealth be deemed to be naturalized, and have the same rights, powers, and privileges, and be subject to the same obligations, as a person who has obtained a certificate of naturalization.”

The effect of this is that a child would be naturalized if the parents were naturalized; but it would not apply to those who were of age at the time that their parents took out naturalization papers. They will be able to take out naturalization papers for themselves.

Amendment agreed to.

Clause, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 7—

Section 11 of the principal Act is amended by omitting the words “it is proved to the satisfaction of the Governor-General that a certificate of naturalization has been obtained by any untrue statement of fact or intention,” and by inserting in their stead the following:—

“(a) it is proved to the satisfaction of the Governor-General that a certificate of naturalization has been obtained by any untrue statement of fact or intention; or

(b) the Governor-General is satisfied that it is desirable for any reason that a certificate of naturalization should be revoked.”

Mr. GLYNN (Angas—Minister for Home and Territories [9.58].—I move—

That the following words be added to the clause:—

“and by omitting the proviso thereto and inserting in its stead the following sub-sections:—

(2.) Where a certificate of naturalization is revoked the Governor-General may by order declare that the wife of the person whose certificate is revoked and any minor children of that person who have acquired British nationality pursuant to this Act shall cease to be British subjects and such persons shall thereupon become aliens, but save as in this sub-section provided the nationality of the wife and minor children of a person whose certificate is revoked shall not be affected by the revocation and they shall remain British subjects:

Provided that it shall be lawful for any such wife within six months after the date of the order of revocation to make a declaration of alienage and on making that declaration she and any minor children of her husband and herself who have acquired British nationality pursuant to this Act shall cease to be British subjects and shall become aliens:

Provided further that it shall be lawful for any such minor child within six months after attaining the age of twenty-one years to make a declaration of alienage and thereupon he shall cease to be a British subject and shall become an alien.

(3.) Nothing in this section shall affect the property rights of any person who so cease to be a British subject, as existing at the date when he so ceased.”

The proviso referred to is to be found in section 11 of the principal Act, which deals with revocation of certificates of naturalization. Such certificates can be revoked, under the law as it stands, only where they have been obtained by fraud; but to that provision there is the proviso that the revocation shall not affect rights previously acquired by any other person.

Mr. TUDOR.—Is that an amendment?

Mr. GLYNN.—It is an amendment by way of an addition to the clause. As a matter of fact, a somewhat similar provision has been embodied in the Imperial Act. When I saw that honorable members were inclined to favour a more extensive measure, I thought it advisable to insert this amendment. Its effect is to provide that if a man loses his nationality the Governor-General may declare that his wife also loses it. But unless there be reason for taking action, this power will not be exercised. Otherwise, the nationality of the wife will remain unchanged.

Mr. TUDOR (Yarra) [10.2].—I will undertake to say that nine-tenths of the

members of this Committee do not understand the amendment, although the legal members may pretend that they understand it. It would have been better if the Minister had included this provision in the Bill before it was submitted for our consideration.

Mr. GLYNN.—A similar provision is contained in the Imperial Act.

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—The honorable member knows that it is all right.

Mr. TUDOR.—I will accept the Minister's word for that. As a matter of fact, we are obliged to do so. But it would have been far better if the provision had been included in the Bill when it was drafted.

Mr. GLYNN.—I quite agree with the honorable member.

Dr. MALONEY (Melbourne) [10.4].—The latter portion of the amendment sets out that it shall be lawful for any minor child, within six months after attaining the age of twenty-one years, to make a declaration of alienage, and thereupon he shall cease to be a British subject. I should like to know why a limit of six months is imposed in this case?

Mr. GLYNN.—The option must be exercised shortly after the child becomes of age.

Dr. MALONEY.—Then we shall be giving property stronger rights than are accorded to human life.

Mr. GLYNN.—No.

Dr. MALONEY.—Then why not limit property rights to a six-months' period?

Mr. GLYNN.—A man ought not, by cancellation of his nationality, to be deprived of property which he has acquired while he was a British subject.

Dr. MALONEY.—Can he, as an alien, own property against the Commonwealth.

Mr. GLYNN.—Britain allows aliens to hold property.

Amendment agreed to.

Mr. BRENNAN (Batman) [10.7].—This would have been a convenient place to introduce a very necessary amendment but for the fact that the Minister has informed us of his intention to bring forward a larger and more far-reaching measure dealing with naturalization at an early date. At the same time, I cannot allow this Bill to pass without reprobating the present condition of the law in regard to the rights of married women. As most honorable members are aware, a

woman's nationality is that of her husband, and a very glaring instance of the gross injustice of that arbitrary survival from mediæval times was afforded the other day, when the Minister himself published the numbers of the persons to whom naturalization papers had recently been granted. One of these individuals was a German, and people were naturally led to inquire under what circumstances we would grant naturalization rights to a German at the present time. The person in question was a woman who had married a German some twenty years ago, and had thus acquired his nationality although she herself was British born. Her husband has been dead for many years, but the nationality of this British-born lady persists as German.

Mr. GLYNN.—That is the law of every country except the United States of America, and there immense trouble has been caused by reason of there being two nationalities in one family.

Mr. BRENNAN.—I think that the Minister recognises the absurdity of the existing condition of affairs, and I hope that when the wider measure foreshadowed by him is submitted for our consideration this anomaly will be removed. It certainly will not be satisfactory to me if I am then informed that we cannot proceed in advance of British legislation. Of course, I quite recognise that in this matter we are bound to some extent by British legislation, because it is an international matter. But I do hope that the Minister will effect this most necessary reform in our naturalization laws, which have long been the subject of protest by thinking women as well as men—even if necessary to the extent of making representations to the Imperial authorities.

Clause, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 8—

Section 12 of the principal Act is amended—

(b) by omitting from sub-section (2) thereof the words "not be liable to any fee or charge in respect thereof," and inserting in their stead the words "be charged such fee as is prescribed."

Section proposed to be amended—

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(2) A person to whom a certificate of naturalization is granted shall not be liable to any fee or charge in respect thereof.

Mr. TUDOR (Yarra) [10.12].—A person desiring letters of naturalization may be required to advertise in perhaps half-a-dozen newspapers, as well as pay a prescribed fee. We prided ourselves, when the Act of 1903 was passed, on having made naturalization free. The trouble in South Africa was caused greatly by the annoyance to Britishers of the Boer restrictions on naturalization.

Dr. MALONEY (Melbourne) [10.13].—I hope that the Minister will abolish the fee, and let the noble Act on our statute-book remain unchanged in this respect.

Mr. GLYNN (Angas—Minister for Home and Territories) [10.14].—My intention is that the fee shall be a small one. In one of the States it was 2s. 6d., in another 10s., and, I believe, in one as much as £1. It has been suggested that a fee of 10s. would be sufficient. I think it will be better to leave the matter to regulation. Naturalization will be applied for in connexion with applications for old-age pensions.

Mr. TUDOR.—A person must be naturalized for three years before applying for an old-age pension.

Mr. GLYNN.—I think that that position has been altered. I remember moving in that direction.

Mr. TUDOR.—Surely the same fee will be charged to every one?

Mr. GLYNN.—More persons apply for letters of naturalization for the sake of old-age pensions than for any other reason, and, therefore, the fee should be small. I think that a fee of 10s. would do. However, if it is the wish of the Committee that no fee shall be charged, I move—

That paragraph (b) be left out.

Amendment agreed to.

Clause, as amended, agreed to.

Dr. MALONEY (Melbourne) [10.16].

—I move—

That the following new clause be inserted:—

"Notwithstanding anything contained in this Act or any other Act, any person to whom letters of naturalization have been issued by the Dominion of New Zealand shall be entitled *ipso facto* to a grant of letters of naturalization from the Commonwealth.

My desire is that we should hold out the right hand of friendship to the Dominion of New Zealand. It is foolish, and almost

idiotic, to require a person who has become a British subject by naturalization in New Zealand to reside two years here before he can apply for naturalization under our law. As I pointed out earlier, prior to Federation a person who had been naturalized in Victoria, if he crossed into New South Wales, could not exercise the privileges of citizenship until he had lived there for a certain time, and had been naturalized under the New South Wales law. The pursuit of work might have compelled such a man to go on to Queensland, and there further naturalization would have been required; and so with the other States.

Mr. CORSER.—Is not this a matter for arrangement with the Dominion?

Dr. MALONEY.—Some one must make the advance. Two persons never say "Good day" at the same moment. The honorable member, being a big chap, would be the one to say "Good day" first, and I want the great Commonwealth of Australia to make an advance to the lesser Dominion. My wish is that the production of letters of naturalization granted in New Zealand shall enable a person to obtain letters of naturalization in the Commonwealth.

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—I think that most members sympathize with the honorable member's object; but would it not be wise to leave the whole matter over for consideration until a larger measure is before Parliament, providing in the meantime for reciprocity?

Dr. MALONEY.—The interjection reminds me of an incident following a big colliery accident. Some were praying and speaking of their sympathy with the women and children who had been bereft of their breadwinners, when a man said, "I do not know much about prayers, but this is my sympathy," and planked down all the money that he had in his pocket. We may have, by-and-by, reciprocity with New Zealand in the matter of old-age pensions. Any one naturalized in the Home Land, in any of its four kingdoms, can exercise the rights of a British subject throughout the British Empire. I do not object to any altering of my phraseology, and I am willing to accept an amendment that will provide for the production of letters of naturalization from New Zealand giving the

right to apply for letters of naturalization in Australia without any condition as to residence.

Mr. GLYNN.—That is not done in Great Britain.

Dr. MALONEY.—In Great Britain they do not give men and women the right to vote. I do not wish to press my proposal to a division, but shall feel bound to do so.

Mr. GLYNN.—All I can promise is most careful consideration of the proposal, probably towards its acceptance in connexion with a larger measure.

Dr. MALONEY.—When I was at school I was told that with a big pinch of salt I could catch a bird, because it could not fly then. Is not the statement of the Minister much the same as that tale? He did a just act recently, and why should he not be willing now to allow residence in New Zealand to count as residence in Australia?

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—It is a matter for a reciprocal arrangement.

Dr. MALONEY.—Let the big Commonwealth of Australia make an advance by holding out the hand to the smaller Dominion. I feel that it hopeless, and I regret very much that the parochial feeling of a great continent should refuse the right to the small Dominion.

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—It is by no means hopeless.

Dr. MALONEY.—I submit the amendment.

Mr. WEST (East Sydney) [10.21].—I look upon this proposal as one which is designed for the benefit of the whole of the British Empire. The party to which I belong has always shown a proper spirit in these matters. I ask honorable members opposite to consider what is the intention of the phrase, "one people, one destiny." In my opinion, the Government will be very unwise indeed if they do not accept the amendment. It is within the realm of reason, and in accordance with those democratic ideals which the nations at large are endeavouring to formulate. The real meaning and object of the present war is to secure the government of the people by the people. Therefore, I cannot understand the Ministerial opposition to this proposal. I feel satisfied that in time New Zealand will acknowledge naturalization papers issued in Australia. It is our duty, I submit, to enact this proposal, and so teach the people of New

Zealand what is the real meaning of democratic government. Honorable members opposite really ought to be falling over each other to support the amendment. Certainly the hour is late, but no matter how late it is, the duty of the House is to legislate in accordance with the spirit and the intention of those who sent us here. It is all very well for the Minister to tell us that by and by he is going to bring down some great measure. If honorable members understand why they are sent here, they will seize the first opportunity to legislate in accordance with the desire of the people, and not wait for something to turn up. We were not sent here to adopt a Micawber style of doing business, but to carry proposals of this character. Many of our supporters, of course, do not expect liberal legislation to emanate from the present Government, but we ought to sit here, even if we should have to sit all night, to enforce the will of the people and oppose the Conservatives on the other side, who seem to think that they possess all wisdom. We on this side are displaying the broad liberal spirit which is supposed to characterize English legislative bodies. I ask the Government to assist the honorable member for Melbourne to get this principle enacted. I have been in New Zealand, and I feel confident that if the amendment is adopted the people of that Dominion will clap their hands to-morrow morning when they read in the press that the legislators of Australia are so liberal minded. Honorable members who sit on this side are the true leaders of Democracy. It was we who legislated in accordance with those noble principles which we hope will, as the outcome of the war, become universal. It is our duty to inculcate into the minds of honorable members opposite the knowledge which we possess. If this amendment is rejected, they will feel sorry that they did not fall in with the views of the honorable member for Melbourne. However, this is a serious matter about which we should not joke. If these persons are considered worthy of naturalization in New Zealand, it is an insult to the people of New Zealand to refuse naturalization here.

Mr. WISE.—The New Zealand Government will not allow Australians to return to Australia.

Mr. WEST.—The honorable member forgets that that is a war measure on the

part of the New Zealand Government. I hope that the Minister will see his way clear to accept the amendment, which I regard as in every way desirable.

Dr. MALONEY (Melbourne) [10.32].—Will the Minister allow the consideration of the proposed new clause to be postponed in order that it may be printed? We all know very well that, when the division bells ring, members will come in and vote without really understanding that they are voting to exclude their brethren from New Zealand. If the clause is printed, and a vote taken on a subsequent date, every member will know about what he is voting.

Mr. GLYNN.—There are technical difficulties in the way of applying the proposed new clause. I quite agree with the principle advocated by the honorable member for Melbourne, and, as far as I can, I shall carry it out; but such an amendment cannot be made in the Bill now before us.

Dr. MALONEY.—What is the use of sympathy if, when you have the power, you will not amend the Bill? Will the Minister accept a clause if it is made to provide that any one to whom letters of naturalization have been issued by the Dominion of New Zealand will be considered as having resided in the country for the necessary number of years, so that they may apply immediately for naturalization here.

Mr. GLYNN (Angas—Minister for Home and Territories) [10.34].—I can assure the honorable member that, so far as I am concerned, I shall, at the first opportunity, try to attain the end he has in view; but that cannot properly be done by means of this measure. The provision of 1903 applies only to certificates of naturalization issued in the United Kingdom, and I think the reason is that these certificates are valid outside the United Kingdom, whereas those issued in New Zealand are not. We would be adopting a certificate of no efficiency here as the basis of a grant here; and I do not think we have the power. Even in the case of the United Kingdom there must be certain procedure, which is not provided for in the amendment; and because the proposal is practically impossible of application under existing legislation I object to it. Notwithstanding that the provisions in our Act are applicable to the United

Kingdom we are asked to accept conditions prescribed in New Zealand as determining the right of people to apply here; and this, I submit, would be departing from uniformity rather than accomplishing it.

Question—That the proposed new clause be added to the Bill—put. The Committee divided.

Ayes	9
Noes	26

Majority	17
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AYES.

Considine, M. P.	Wallace, C.
Fenton, J. E.	West, J. E.
Finlayson, W. F.	Tellers:
Mathews, J.	Maloney, Dr.
Tudor, F. G.	Page, J.

NOES.

Archibald, W. O.	Mackay, G. H.
Boyd, J. A.	Manifold, J. C.
Brennan, Frank	Pigott, H. R. M.
Cook, Joseph	Poynton, A.
Corser, E. B. C.	Rodgers, A. S.
Falkiner, F. B. S.	Sinclair, H.
Foster, Richard.	Smith, Laird
Glynn, P. McM.	Spence, W. G.
Groom, L. E.	Webster, W.
Irvine, Sir William	Wise, G. H.
Jensen, J. A.	
Leckie, J. W.	Tellers:
Livingston, J.	Greene, W. M.
Lynch, J.	Orchard, R. B.

Question so resolved in the negative.

Proposed new clause negatived.

Bill reported with amendments; report adopted.

Bill read a third time.

House adjourned at 10.45 p.m.

Senate.

Thursday, 9 August, 1917.

The PRESIDENT took the chair at 3 p.m., and read prayers.

KNITTING WOOL.

Senator EARLE.—I ask the Minister controlling prices the following questions, without notice:—

1. Is he aware that thousands of women in the Commonwealth are engaged in knitting socks and other woollen goods for the soldiers at the front?

2. Is he aware that many of these women provide the wool necessary for this purpose at their own expense?

3. Is he aware that the price of manufactured wool has increased by at least 100 per cent. since the outbreak of war?

4. Does he think that this increase is justified?

5. If he does not, will the Government take immediate steps to fix the price of knitting wool, in order that the women of Australia may be assisted and encouraged in rendering this great service to our men?

Senator RUSSELL.—I was aware of most of the facts stated by the honorable senator, and I think that I can answer the fifth question. The matter of knitting wool is now under consideration as to prices and conditions.

ROSENEATH HOSPITAL.

Senator BAKHAP.—Has the Minister for Defence had his attention directed to the fact that Staff-Sergeant Foster, a returned soldier, and a member of the Tasmanian House of Assembly, in moving the Address-in-Reply the other day, animadverted upon the unsatisfactory nature of certain features of the arrangements connected with Roseneath Hospital, and will he take the matter into consideration?

Senator PEARCE.—I am sorry to say that I have not had time to read the *Hansard* report.

Senator BAKHAP.—There is no *Hansard*, but you can see a report in the newspapers.

Senator PEARCE.—I did not read a report in a newspaper either. Senator Earle brought the matter of Roseneath Hospital under my notice some weeks ago, and as a result of this representation I instructed that there should be prepared for me a report on the points raised by him. That report has not yet reached me, but I will deal with the matter immediately I receive the report.

Senator BAKHAP.—Anyhow, it is still a live question.

PAPERS.

The following papers were presented:—

Customs Act 1901-1916—

Proclamation dated 18th July, 1917, prohibiting exportation (except with Minister's consent) of Glue Pieces.

Regulations amended, &c.—Statutory Rules 1917, No. 158.

Defence Act 1903-1915.—Regulations amended, &c.—Statutory Rules 1917, Nos. 163, 164, 165, 166, 167.

Excise Act 1901.—Regulations amended, &c.—Statutory Rules 1917, No. 159.

Papers regarding case of Quartermaster-Sergeant A. T. Ozanne.

War Precautions Act 1914-1916.—Regulations amended, &c.—Statutory Rules 1917, Nos. 155, 156, 162, 168.

WOOL APPRAISEMENT.

Senator MAUGHAN.—Should the present Government appraisement of Australian wool for the Imperial Government continue for the current financial year, will the Government see that the claims of Rockhampton as a port for a district producing more than 60 per cent. of the Queensland clip be recognised by the establishment of a wool-appraising centre thereat?

Senator MILLEN.—I can only promise to bring the question under the notice of the Prime Minister.

NATURALIZATION BILL.

Bill received from the House of Representatives, and (on motion by Senator MILLEN) read a first time.

MR. CRITCHLEY PARKER.

TENDERS FOR PRINTING WORK.

Senator NEEDHAM asked the Minister for Defence, *upon notice*—

1. Were tenders called for the printing work executed for the Government by Mr. Critchley Parker?

2. If not, why not?

Senator PEARCE.—The answer to the honorable senator's questions is—

1 and 2. The Government Printer was asked to undertake this work, but declined, as his office was overtaxed with matter in connexion with the referendum. Mr. Parker's quotation was submitted to the Government Printer, who stated that it was reasonable. The arrangement with Mr. Parker included, besides printing, the preparation of a prospectus, advertising sales, distribution and the cost of postage, cartage, &c.

USE OF WORD "EMPIRE."

Senator Lt.-Colonel BOLTON asked the Vice-President of the Executive Council, *upon notice*—

1. Is it the intention of the Government to countenance the exploitation of the patriotic sentiment by permitting the use of the word "Empire" in any movement for raising funds by public subscription for any purpose other than a patriotic purpose?

2. In the event of question No. 1 being answered in the negative, will the Government make it an offence under the War Precautions Act to use the word "Empire" in any movement for obtaining funds by public subscription for any purpose other than a patriotic purpose?

Senator MILLEN.—The Government deprecate the use of the word "Empire"

in connexion with public appeals for subscriptions for other than patriotic funds, but do not feel justified in using the powers of the War Precautions Act to prohibit it at this juncture.

SOLDIERS NEEDING LAND.

Senator FAIRBAIRN asked the Vice-President of the Executive Council, *upon notice*—

Will he state the number of soldiers who desired to be provided with land in each State in response to a circular sent to them by the Hon. J. C. Watson, and also how many of these applicants were considered to have sufficient experience or qualification to justify their being so provided for, the figures to be for each State?

Senator MILLEN.—The returns received to the 1st May show that 35,680 have expressed the desire to settle on the land, and of this number 21,097 state that they have had experience. The figures for each State are as follows:—

States.	Total Cards Analyzed.	Number Desirous of Settling on Land.	With Experience.	With Resources.	Percentage with Experience.	Percentage of Settlers to Total Cards.
Queensland..	5,339	1,995	1,361	270	68.2	37.3
New South Wales ..	67,528	12,911	6,607	1,410	51.0	19.1
Victoria ..	23,596	7,944	4,221	803	53.1	33.2
South Australia ..	19,679	8,353	5,706	1,649	68.1	42.4
Western Australia ..	16,388	3,148	2,009	412	63.8	19.2
Tasmania ..	6,943	1,329	1,193	89	82.2	19.1
Total for Commonwealth..	139,473	35,680	21,097	4,633	59.1	25.5

SITES FOR SHIPYARDS.

Senator NEEDHAM asked the Vice-President of the Executive Council, *upon notice*—

Is the Federal Government in communication with the Government of Western Australia, inquiring *re* the selection of suitable sites for shipyards in that State in connexion with the proposed establishment of the shipbuilding industry in Australia?

Senator MILLEN.—The answer is—Yes.

INTOXICATING LIQUORS.

Senator THOMAS asked the Vice-President of the Executive Council, *upon notice*—

Whether, in view of the action of our ally, Russia, in prohibiting vodka from the commencement of the war, which action was followed by the general prohibition of all intoxicants, and, further, the adoption of prohibition

by the people of eight out of the nine provinces of Canada (either permanently or for the period of the war and demobilization), the Government will exercise its powers to stop the manufacture, importation, and sale of intoxicating liquors in Australia for the remaining period of the war and the time of repatriation and demobilization?

Senator MILLEN.—The matter will receive consideration.

AGRICULTURAL INDUSTRY: INQUIRY.

Senator LYNCH asked the Vice-President of the Executive Council, *upon notice*—

Whether the Government will consider the advisability of appointing a Commission to inquire into—

- (a) The number of agricultural holdings in the Commonwealth that have been converted from cereal production and dairying to pastoral production, and the causes thereof?
- (b) The number of agricultural holdings that have been abandoned by their former owners during the last three years, and the causes thereof?
- (c) The social economic and domestic condition of persons engaged in agricultural production in the Commonwealth?

Senator MILLEN.—The Government will consider the question, and I shall let the honorable senator know the result.

Senator LYNCH.—Arising out of that answer, I wish to ask the Vice-President of the Executive Council whether, in view of the established fact that wheat growing is either at a standstill or is declining, while scores of wheat farms have been abandoned—

The PRESIDENT.—The honorable senator is now making statements which are not in order.

Senator LYNCH.—Statements of fact.

The PRESIDENT.—In asking a question, the honorable senator must not make statements, whether they are facts or not.

Senator LYNCH.—In view of the pressing demand that the Government shall do something in the way of reducing the cost of living, I desire to know whether they will bear in mind the fact that wheat growing is at a standstill in some of the States, and that hundreds of farms are being abandoned, despite the fiction that the price of wheat is at a soaring figure to-day?

Senator MILLEN.—I can only assure the honorable senator that all the matters which he has stated, and the many other

matters which he obviously desired to state, will be considered by the Government when they are reviewing the main question.

DAYLIGHT SAVING REPEAL BILL.

Bill read a third time.

RAILWAYS BILL.

SECOND READING.

Debate resumed from 8th August, (*vide* page 823), on motion by Senator RUSSELL—

That this Bill be now read a second time.

Senator LYNCH (Western Australia) [3.15].—This is a measure which has not made its appearance any too soon. As honorable senators are aware, the Commonwealth has at length attained to the dignity and responsibility of a railway constructor and controller. In the early days of the Federation it was not thought wise by the electors to transfer the railways of the States to the Commonwealth, but it has been made quite clear by the lapse of time that the expanding necessities of the States and the Commonwealth demanded that the Commonwealth should step into the breach and take a share in railway building as well as railway controlling. At the present time the Commonwealth is the owner of strips of railway all over this continent. The east-west railway will be 1,050 miles in length, and will traverse two States. The Oodnadatta line, which was taken over by the Commonwealth under the agreement in relation to the Northern Territory, is 450 miles long, and is situated wholly in South Australia. Then there is a strip of railway entirely within the Northern Territory which is also the property of the Commonwealth. Lastly, we have a small line working in the Federal Capital—a line which is intended to connect the Capital with the Federal port at Jervis Bay. So that the Commonwealth is the sole owner and controller of four railways situated in four States and Territories.

The proposal embodied in this Bill is that all these lines shall be brought under a unified control. No doubt that is a very necessary step to take. But, in my judgment, great difficulty will be experienced as the result of locating the seat of control of all these lines in Melbourne. At the

same time, I am not in a position to suggest anything in the nature of an improvement. Melbourne is to be the seat of control, whereas our railway activities will extend from the extreme north of the Northern Territory to Western Australia, and as far as Jervis Bay on the east. It is quite clear, therefore, that, viewed from that stand-point alone, the position occupied by the Commonwealth is anything but a pleasing one. In order to efficiently supervise any undertaking it is necessary that the person charged with that supervision should be located as near to the undertaking as possible. But, in addition to the drawback that will be experienced by reason of the control of these lines being centred in Melbourne, we have to recollect that the whole of these four railways are far from reaching the point of paying their way. That is not a very inviting prospect, but it is one which we have to face. Of course, it must be remembered that all these lines will benefit the States in a very substantial, but indirect, way.

While the States' railway systems are situated in their more thickly populated areas, and on that account alone are highly payable propositions, unfortunately the lines owned by the Commonwealth run through sparsely populated country, and consequently will not pay for a long time, although they will be very valuable feeders in the meantime to the existing State systems. The Commonwealth has undertaken the responsibility not only of bringing about the many advantages to the people incidental to the administration of the civil laws, but has also to shoulder the serious responsibility and expense of engaging in a developmental policy from which so far there is little visible prospect of any adequate return. The Commonwealth has been accused of securing most of the paying services and grabbing the revenue to an undue extent, but seeing that we are about to be saddled with four non-paying railway lines it can no longer be said that the Commonwealth has the cream of the position, at any rate so far as railway construction and ownership are concerned. However, we shall have to be content with that position. The whole of the people of the Commonwealth, through their agency the Commonwealth

Government, will have to be satisfied to run these railway systems at a loss for an indefinite period. I am anxious that they should be made to pay as soon as possible, and this Bill has been introduced as a means towards that end, because it will to some extent unify the separate controls that now exist, and introduce some order and system which we hope will be a marked improvement on the present state of affairs.

Leaving the east-west railway, a curious position arises in South Australia. The Commonwealth finds itself hobbled through having taken over 170 odd miles of line from Port Augusta to Oodnadatta under certain difficult and disadvantageous conditions imposed at the time of the transfer. The Northern Territory Acceptance Act included a provision very advantageous to South Australia, but not at all advantageous to the Commonwealth, by which the Commonwealth is obliged to run that line under the conditions that obtained when the railway came over to us. It has to run the service on the scale of freights and fares that obtained then, and according to a scheduled time-table which was in vogue then. I believe the South Australian Government has since found it necessary to make a radical departure from the freights and fares which obtained when the line was taken over, and also from the scheduled time-table which the Commonwealth is obliged to observe. It is therefore clear that something needs to be done to give the Commonwealth a reasonable chance of making the line pay. We take over the line and pay for it, yet are obliged to run it on a time-table and charges laid down by the State Parliament years ago. If this Bill does nothing else but show the way to a better understanding between South Australia and the Commonwealth in this matter, its introduction will have done some good.

In the Northern Territory line we find a slight difficulty, which in certain circumstances might be described as a grave one, because there a kind of dual control has been introduced. The Administrator has had a very serious share of the control of the railway. It has been found from experience that the form of dual control which has existed up to date in that part of Australia is anything but

economical and safe, and tends to anything but wise and efficient control. During the few months I was at the Works Office I very soon had disclosed to me the nature of the position there, which is clearly not in keeping with the best railway management. The Administrator has had his own functions to perform, but the terms of his engagement conferred on him a power which at times jarred very severely on the railway management proper.

Senator NEEDHAM.—Will this Bill remove that?

Senator LYNCH.—I believe it is in process of removal. The State authorities had no such difficulties trammelling them in their railway control. The States within limits are a law unto themselves, but the Commonwealth is not free.

I do not need to argue now in justification of the east-west line. It is almost an accomplished fact, and is to be opened in a month or two, but it will not be the hopelessly unpayable proposition which some of its critics would have us believe, or nearly as unpayable as the other two lines I have mentioned. It will cost, complete with rolling-stock and other requirements, £6,600,000; the Oodnadatta line cost £2,250,000; and I estimate that the cost of the Northern Territory railway will be close on £1,000,000. The Commonwealth will therefore have, with the Capital Territory line, a railway system scattered throughout four of the States, costing approximately £9,000,000. Of those four systems the Western Australian is by no means the least hopeful, although all are non-paying propositions. According to the Minister, the loss on working expenses on the Western Australian line will be £8,900 per annum, on the Northern Territory line £11,000, and on the Oodnadatta line £31,000. This is the difference between the working expenses and the revenue received, leaving the interest out of account, but if we add interest it makes the position of the Western Australian line slightly worse. On a mileage basis the loss on the Northern Territory line will be £120 per mile, on the Oodnadatta £242 per mile, and on the Western Australian line £200 per mile, so that the east-west railway comes somewhere between the other two.

Some discussion has ranged round the cost of railway construction in this country lately. I have my own views concerning the manner in which the increase in cost was brought about, and since I have had an opportunity of looking into the cost of railway construction in other parts of the world, notably in the United States of America, I have had reason to modify my own opinion concerning the east-west line.

Senator DE LARGIE.—Do you think you can make a fair comparison between that railway and the lines in the United States of America?

Senator LYNCH.—It would be difficult, I admit, to make a comparison with a thousand miles of railway in the United States of America to correspond with our trans-Australian line; but I find from the Inter-State Commission's report up to 30th June, 1911, that American railways, fully equipped, cost on the average £13,000 per mile. Another equally competent authority, Trautwein, in his text-book on railway construction, gives the average cost for United States of America railways for track alone at £5,000 per mile. This estimate, of course, does not include station accommodation, water supply, or rolling-stock, and it is based on an average labour wage of 7s. 3d. per day. I am officially informed that, in October last, the labour rate on the trans-Australian railway was 13s. 1d. per day, so it is quite clear, if we bear in mind the differing rates of pay, that the construction cost of the trans-Australian line compares favorably with that of railways in other parts of the world.

Senator DE LARGIE.—But America is a high-wage country.

Senator LYNCH.—As I have said, the construction cost of American lines is put by Trautwein at £5,000 for track alone, and in the case of the trans-Australian line the cost, exclusive of rolling-stock, is estimated at £5,800, although Mr. Henry Deane, the first Engineer-in-Chief, estimated the cost at £3,500, which, as events have proved, was much too low.

Senator GUTHRIE.—But at that time prices for material were much below the present rate.

Senator LYNCH.—We are all aware, of course, that the war has upset all our calculations. Mr. Bell estimates the cost

of the trans-Australian line at £6,300 per mile, including rolling-stock, while Mr. Deane puts it at £3,800, so that our cost is only about half that of American railway lines.

Senator EARLE.—Judging by the pictures we saw the other evening, I would sooner construct 5 miles of line on the trans-Australian railway than 1 mile in Tasmania.

Senator LYNCH.—I have one more comparison to make, and then I have finished. The Oodnadatta line, built by the South Australian Government on a 3-ft. 6-in. gauge, when the basic wage was 6s. per day, cost, with rolling-stock, £5,072 per mile, and without rolling-stock £4,774. When we remember that this section is laid on the narrow gauge with 40-lb. rails, and remember also that the trans-Australian line is laid with 80-lb. rails on the 4-ft. 8½-in. gauge, we realize that the construction cost of the latter does not compare unfavorably with other railway lines.

While I make that admission, I feel that I ought to say that the railway could have been built more cheaply under better management, and I want to speak quite frankly in this matter. When the railway was authorized in 1911, Mr. Deane was in charge, and while I do not wish to criticise him unduly, it will be admitted, I think, that some very serious mistakes were made in the initial stages of that work. Mr. Deane had the approval of the Minister of the day to experiment in internal combustion engines, and instead of pushing forward with the construction of dams for water supply—which is so vital to the satisfactory working of the line under steam traction—the whole water question was held in abeyance for a long time. While in the early stages of the work the management clung to the idea that internal combustion engines would be the best, subsequently there was too long a delay in placing orders for steam engines, and I am satisfied that, if we had to start the work again, we would, at the outset, assemble our material and get the best advice in Australia from those States which have built railway lines over long stretches of dry and waterless country. The water supply, as we now see, was a most important factor. When I traversed the route last January I found that excellent dams had been constructed up to the 150-mile point on the Kalgoor-

lie side, but they contained no water, and it was necessary to cart water a distance of 520 miles from Kalgoorlie. We can understand what this would mean if, in the construction of a railway from Melbourne to Sydney, we were obliged to cart water from this city up to a point very near to Sydney. A mistake was made in not planning the work so that a water supply could be assured as the road was under construction.

Turning to the Bill itself, I notice that it introduces an innovation by combining construction and general control and management under one head. I believe that that will, at least for some time to come, be found to be a step in the right direction. In several of the States at the present time a separate Department—the Department of Public Works—is given charge of railway construction work. Under this measure, with the same Department exercising control and management, as well as carrying out construction, it will be possible, as it is not in some of the States, for the same plant to be used with advantage by both Departments. In some of the States, under the control of Commissioners, plants may be lying idle and rusting, and though the Public Works Departments in the same States might make use of those plants with advantage, they are obliged to purchase additional plant for themselves. To have both Departments under the one head, as proposed by this Bill, should tend to remove friction, and make for economy in connexion with existing lines, and in the construction of spur lines which may be found necessary.

I notice that the Bill imposes several restrictions upon the Commissioner. He is obliged to consult the Minister upon very many things. He cannot lease property without the consent of the Minister. He cannot purchase imported goods of a greater value than £1,000, or rolling-stock, or locomotives of a greater value than £5,000 without the Minister's consent, and he must incur no expenditure outside ordinary expenditure unless he has the consent of the Minister to do so. Further, the general policy with respect to railway lines is left in the hands of the Minister.

Senator GUTHRIE.—Hear, hear! That will give Parliament a say in those matters.

Senator LYNCH.—I am not inclined to approve of that unconditionally. We have had in Australia political control of railways in some of the States, and non-political control in others, and neither form has given the satisfaction expected from it. In my opinion, success depends entirely upon the man in charge—the man behind the gun—whether he be the Minister of Railways for the time being or a Commissioner. I do not care to reflect upon men who are not here to put their own case and dispute what I say, but I can readily imagine Ministers failing to do their duty when put in charge of a Department.

Senator GUTHRIE.—They are responsible to Parliament if they do fail to do their duty.

Senator LYNCH.—It often takes a long time for Parliament to get on the track of a Minister who has failed to carry out his Ministerial duties.

Senator GUTHRIE.—What has the honorable senator been doing?

Senator LYNCH.—Senator Guthrie, who has been here for a long time, must know as well as I do that it is often almost impossible for private members to right things that have been done wrong under Ministerial control. However, I am not here to approve of this proposal or to condemn it. I am prepared to give it a trial. I realize that the Bill gives an enormous power to the Minister, and that the Commissioner will be unable to do anything except of a minor character without his consent.

When I recall what the Commonwealth Bank has done, and what a splendid institution it is, I feel that it is possible to go too far in the direction of removing the control of a work from the man who is held responsible for carrying it out. Though it may be regarded as a digression to some extent, I do not think we could improve upon the way in which the Commonwealth Bank is being run. In connexion with its management, we have removed almost the last trace of Ministerial control, and I venture to say that it has given satisfaction, not only to its originators, but to the general public. The Commonwealth Bank is, in my opinion, a standing example of the success with which a public institution may be run with a minimum of Ministerial and political interference.

Senator RUSSELL.—We do not allow the Commonwealth Bank to stamp coinage.

Senator LYNCH.—No, but we give the manager of the Commonwealth Bank certain powers.

The PRESIDENT.—Order!

Senator LYNCH.—I do not wish to refer to the Commonwealth Bank further than to say that it presents a valuable lesson to Australia of the way in which institutions nominally under the control of the Government should be conducted.

In the several Parliaments of this country for a number of years men have debated the question whether a purely political or a non-political control of railway systems is the more advantageous.

Senator RUSSELL.—This Bill provides for a happy mixture of both.

Senator LYNCH.—I notice that in this measure the attempt is made to strike a balance between the two systems by referring matters in dispute between the Minister and the Commissioner to the Governor-General in Council, who, after all, will be the Minister for Works and Railways for the day. This is an innovation which is perhaps worth trying; but, for my part, I am not too keen upon giving Ministers too much control in these matters unless they are men who can be trusted to discharge their Ministerial duties solely in the interests of the public.

Senator RUSSELL.—That is what they are supposed to do.

Senator LYNCH.—I am aware of that. I have nothing further to say, except that I am prepared to give a general support to the measure in the belief that a fair balance will be held between the taxpayers of the country on the one hand and the controlling authority in charge of Commonwealth railways on the other. That is what we are after, and that is what we should set our minds to attain.

I have said that the railways of the Commonwealth are not likely to be a very promising proposition for years to come. We shall be saddled with a deficit as a result of their operations for a considerable time, but there is some compensation in the knowledge that the Commonwealth is carrying out a policy of railway construction, the purpose of which is purely developmental, and is building railways where the State authorities would not

dream of building them, or taking charge of lines which the State authorities concerned have been eager to unload upon it. If the State authorities could manage to do so, I have no doubt that they are disposed to unload upon the Commonwealth all their unfavorable railway propositions. I think that we can struggle along without saddling ourselves with any more of these propositions than we have already undertaken to control. I support the Bill, and I hope that as time goes on the taxpayers will realize that as the Commonwealth railways are not designed to bring in any special revenue they cannot fairly be considered upon a purely cash basis, but that directed to the settlement of the interior they will serve a useful purpose.

Senator NEEDHAM (Western Australia) [3.49].—I do not intend to deal with the past so far as the railways of the Commonwealth are concerned under cover of the motion for the second reading of this Bill. I am not much concerned either about the present, but I am concerned about the future of our Commonwealth railways, upon which this Bill is likely to have an important bearing. I agree with the Minister that this is really a machinery measure, which can best be considered in Committee. There is no doubt that, if one desired, he could occupy the time of the Senate at considerable length in reviewing the agitation for the establishment of Commonwealth railways from north to south and from east to west, and also in covering a portion of the ground which Senator Lynch traversed as regards the mismanagement in the construction of the east-west railway and the north-south railway, or in the working of the railways we took over from South Australia. But I consider that this is neither the time nor the place to discuss those matters. Let us simply take a lesson from the past, and try to avoid such mistakes in the future.

In connexion with this Bill, I read the debate in another branch of the Legislature. I noticed that one very important point was raised in reference to the land belonging to the Commonwealth on each side of the line from Port Augusta to Kalgoorlie. I understand that on each side a tract a quarter of a mile wide has been handed over to the Commonwealth Government. As regards Western Australia, no conditions were imposed upon

the Commonwealth Government as to the use of the land, but I am credibly informed that the South Australian Government imposed certain conditions as to the uses to which this strip of land should be put. For instance, we are told when a township springs up along the eastern section of the line, the South Australian Government are to be consulted before that land can be used for that purpose, whereas such a condition does not apply on the western side.

Senator GUTHRIE.—The South Australian Government insist upon the surveying of a township.

Senator NEEDHAM.—Yes; and I believe that they insist upon something further. To my mind, this is a very important question to which honorable senators should devote their attention. It is a Commonwealth railway, and if one State is quite agreeable to hand over a certain tract of country on either side of the line, and leave it entirely in the hands of the Commonwealth Government, I see no reason why another State should impose certain restrictions. It appears very strange indeed that, in the case of a Commonwealth-owned and controlled railway, the National Government should have to go, cap in hand, to a State Government and practically ask what they can do with their own country. It is an anomaly which should not be allowed to exist: it should be removed before the Bill is passed. The matter was stressed very forcibly in another branch of the Legislature, and I understand that the Minister in charge of the measure promised to make further inquiries as to the real attitude of South Australia in connexion with this strip of land. Perhaps the Minister here may be able to furnish this information before the second reading is carried.

Senator DE LARGIE.—I do not think that South Australia parted with any rights.

Senator NEEDHAM.—The South Australian Government reserved to themselves the right of control in more ways than one. Senator Guthrie has just interjected that it is in connexion with the surveying of townships, but I venture to think that if the Minister makes full inquiries he will find that the South Australian Government parted with no rights, whereas, in Western Australia, the strip of land was given free to the Commonwealth Government.

Senator DE LARGIE.—I think it is only fair to say that South Australia gave the Commonwealth enough room to lay down the sleepers and put the rails on them.

Senator NEEDHAM.—Yes; and for such a grant let us be thankful. I render my thanks to the State for that very kind deed. I hope that, in his reply, the Minister will point out how the Commonwealth stands in this regard.

I am glad to see that the Bill also provides for suitable housing accommodation for the employees on the transcontinental line. I think that, in that regard, the Commonwealth might do worse than copy the provisions of the Workmen's Homes Act of Western Australia. I suggest to the Minister that he should look at the Act, and I venture to say that it will be of some assistance to the Commissioner, when he is working out the details of this measure, to take advantage of the conditions of the Act. It will be a lonely life for the employees along the railway, and we cannot do too much to make their conditions as comfortable as possible. I hope that every facility will be given for the education of their children.

I do not see any reference in the measure to the hours which the employees will have to work. Naturally, such a provision does not appear in the Bill, but I hope that the by-laws will initiate the system of working eighty-eight hours per fortnight. I do not think that the system is in existence in any other part of the Commonwealth.

Senator FERRICKS.—What is wrong with having an eight-hours' day?

Senator NEEDHAM.—It will be wise for the Government to take this matter into consideration.

Senator DE LARGIE.—Who is to decide the matter, think you?

Senator NEEDHAM.—The Government.

Senator DE LARGIE.—Do you think that you would leave that much to the Government?

Senator NEEDHAM.—What else could we do?

Senator RUSSELL.—The final power will rest with Parliament, because the by-laws will have to be laid upon the table of the Senate and the House of Representatives.

Senator NEEDHAM.—At any rate, the Government might take into consideration the question of providing that

the hours of employment are not to exceed eighty-eight per fortnight, because the conditions across that great stretch of country will be much more stringent than the conditions obtaining on the railways running through populous centres.

Senator REID.—You want special conditions to be given to these men?

Senator NEEDHAM.—I think that the conditions governing the working of the transcontinental railway demand special treatment for the employees.

Senator DE LARGIE.—The men outside deserve it, too.

Senator REID.—A man who lives there with his family deserves consideration.

Senator NEEDHAM.—Yes; and any person who has an idea of this country will admit that the conditions at their very best will not be so good as those obtaining on railways traversing great centres of population.

I wish to refer to one other matter, and that is as to whether or not the employees on the Commonwealth railways will be brought under the provisions of the Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Act. It is a well-known fact that on two occasions an appeal has been made to the people of the Commonwealth to alter the Constitution, with the view of enabling railway employees to have the benefits of the Commonwealth Court, but so far the people, in their wisdom, have not seen fit to alter the Constitution in that direction.

Senator THOMAS.—That refers to State railways, not to Commonwealth railways.

Senator NEEDHAM.—I am saying so. I do not see such a provision in this measure, and so far no assurance has been given by the Minister that the railway employees of the Commonwealth will have an opportunity to appeal to the Arbitration Court.

Senator THOMAS.—I thought that all Commonwealth officials had.

Senator NEEDHAM.—I thought so, too; but if the honorable member will carefully read the debate on this measure in another place he will find that when a question was raised there the Minister did not give a definite assurance that the employees would have an opportunity to approach the Commonwealth Court. He said that he would make inquiries into the matter. I do not see the necessity for instituting any inquiries. I consider that

the question should be dealt with at once, because there is nothing in the Constitution to prevent the employees on Commonwealth railways from having access to the Commonwealth Court.

Senator REID.—They would settle that matter themselves, would they not?

Senator NEEDHAM.—I know that the men are desirous of getting to the Commonwealth Court, but so far the Minister will not give an assurance that they will have that privilege.

Senator RUSSELL.—I intend to move the insertion of the following provision:—

47A. The Arbitration (Public Service) Act 1911 shall apply to the Railway Service in like manner as it applies to the Public Service of the Commonwealth.

Senator NEEDHAM.—That assurance is good enough for me. Under the provisions of the Public Service Arbitration Act, all other organizations of employees within the Commonwealth Public Service can approach the Arbitration Court. I was surprised to learn from the report of the debate elsewhere that there was a danger of our railway employees not being able to approach the Court, but the Honorary Minister having given the assurance that a provision will be introduced here, I am satisfied.

In Committee, I intend to move amendments in clause 52—they will be circulated this afternoon—in connexion with the rights of employees who have been taken over from State services. Whilst I believe that it was the intention of the Government, and of the framers of the clause, to protect the rights of men who have been in the permanent service of other States—that is, on the Railways or in the Public Service—I do not think the clause covers the gap between the time when the men were taken into the Commonwealth Service and the time of their employment under the provisions of this measure.

The provision for compensation on retirement from the Commonwealth railway service will not, I think, be fair to the employees. It would appear from the wording of the clause, that an employee is simply to get the compensation on retirement which he would have received if he had retired at a similar wage when he was taken over from the service of a State.

Senator SENIOR. — I think that that question was debated on the proposal to take over the Oodnadatta railway.

Senator NEEDHAM.—I believe it was, but in Committee on this measure it can be enlarged upon. At present I think that there is a danger of an injustice, unintentionally I admit, being inflicted upon these employees. I have no more to say at this stage. I welcome the Bill, and I believe that by the time it leaves the Senate it will be fashioned better than it is.

Senator FAIRBAIRN (Victoria) [4.3]. —I have very little to say about this measure, but I want to bring one point forward prominently. I understood that when the National party were returned on the 5th May, economy was to be pursued in the management of the affairs of the Commonwealth. But since I have been in the Senate we have created a Department for the repatriation of soldiers, and now it is proposed to create another Department.

Senator MAUGHAN. — No; the Department has been in existence for five years.

Senator FAIRBAIRN.—It must have been in a very small way.

Senator MAUGHAN.—No.

Senator FAIRBAIRN.—This measure is going to enlarge the Department.

Senator DE LARGIE.—Unfortunately the Department was in a very big way, but people did not seem to realize that fact.

Senator FAIRBAIRN.—As an ordinary business man, my way of working the railways would be different. In the Northern Territory, I suppose Dr. Gilruth will have partial charge. But in regard to the east-west line I think that we ought to make an arrangement with the Railways Commissioners of South Australia and Western Australia to supervise its working for us.

Senator MAUGHAN.—The honorable senator would soon regret that arrangement.

Senator FAIRBAIRN.—I do not think so. The working of the Oodnadatta line has been in the hands of the Railways Commissioners of South Australia.

Senator THOMAS.—And when we wanted to take that line away from them because they were making a good profit upon it we could not get it.

Senator FAIRBAIRN.—I know that South Australians are a very difficult lot to manage. We used to call them the O.T.M., which signifies "On the make." They painted the possibilities

of the Northern Territory in the most glowing colours when they desired the Commonwealth to take it over from South Australia. I hope that the Railways Department of the Commonwealth will not be a big and expensive one, with a Minister in charge of it. According to the Budget delivered yesterday, our estimated expenditure upon the ordinary services of the Commonwealth has increased by £1,017,655 as compared with the expenditure on those services for the previous year. That is a very disappointing result indeed. My only object in rising was to ask the Minister to see that the utmost care is exercised to prevent the Commonwealth being plunged into unnecessary expenditure, because I can see our last shilling heaving on the horizon very fast. If our funds become exhausted we know that our boys at the Front will be placed in a most unenviable position. Having uttered this word of caution I think I have discharged my duty in the matter.

Senator FERRICKS. (Queensland) [4.8].—This Bill aims at consolidating rather than building up an institution for the control of Commonwealth railways. The Commonwealth railways already in existence have very little direct application to Queensland as a State. But honorable senators must endeavour to view these undertakings from a national rather than from a provincial standpoint. In my opinion it will be necessary to consolidate under one roof the body which will have control and be answerable to Parliament for the successful working of these lines. In this connexion the proposition which forms the basis of this Bill—the east-west railway—has for many years been ridiculed in every State of the Commonwealth with the exception of South Australia and Western Australia. I have always been in favour of the construction of that line, and tomorrow I would support a proposal to extend the Oodnadatta line from South Australia to the Northern Territory.

Senator DE LARGIE.—The honorable senator differs from other senators from Queensland, who always voted against it.

Senator FERRICKS.—Some of my late colleagues voted against the River Murray waters project, whilst others supported it, although Queensland had no direct interest in the undertaking. I

view these railway proposals in the same light as I viewed that work.

I confess that I was much struck by the remarks by Senator Lynch this afternoon. While he cast no great reflection on the increased wages received by the workers engaged upon the construction of the east-west line, he did refer to that increase as a factor in its excessive cost. The honorable senator did the same thing yesterday. Now, while the increased wages paid to the employees on this undertaking is a factor in its increased cost, it is not the only, or even the principal, factor. Senator Lynch conclusively proved that by the figures which he quoted. He instituted a comparison between the cost of the construction of this line and the cost of railway construction in America. Quite appropriately it was pointed out by some honorable senators opposite that in America there would probably be far more rock tunnelling to undertake, and rougher country to be traversed. As a result, the comparison which Senator Lynch attempted to draw might not be founded altogether upon an equitable basis. But I suppose there would be very few places in America where water would require to be carted for such great distances as it had to be carted on the east-west line, and certainly there would be no place in America where the metal material for the undertaking would have to be carried a distance of 14,000 miles. To my mind, these factors would more than balance the difference between the cost of railway construction in the two countries. In America, this material would be at their very doors. Senator Lynch pointed out that the line from Adelaide to Oodnadatta was constructed at a cost of £4,744 per mile, exclusive of rolling-stock, and of £5,073 per mile complete. He added this very significant remark, that at the time that railway was constructed wages ruled at 6s. per day. The comparison with the Oodnadatta line shows that the east-west railway has been constructed for less money per mile, despite the increased cost of material and the increased wages paid.

Senator SENIOR.—Has the honorable senator ever travelled over the Oodnadatta line?

Senator FERRICKS.—No.

Senator SENIOR.—The honorable senator would see a very great difference between the engineering difficulties on the two lines.

Senator FERRICKS.—I understood Senator Lynch to say that they traversed very similar country. But it must be recollected that the line to Oodnadatta is built upon a 3-ft. 6-in. gauge whereas the east-west railway has a 4-ft. 8½-in. gauge.

Senator DE LARGIE.—Has the honorable senator seen the country traversed by the Oodnadatta line? The railway has to cross two ranges.

Senator FERRICKS.—A sufficient set-off against that disability is the fact that 80-lb. rails have been used on the east-west line as against only 40-lb. rails on the Oodnadatta line. If, when the latter undertaking was being carried out, navvies received only 6s. per day, nobody can contend that the price of metal at that time would be anything like its price during the period that the east-west line has been in course of construction.

Senator DE LARGIE.—They might have been just as dear.

Senator FERRICKS.—Even if they were, the difference between the weight of rails used would be more than a set-off. During the time that the east-west line has been building, tirades of abuse have been levelled against it, and frequently from a desire to make political capital out of it. It has been repeatedly affirmed that the men were running the show, that the day-labour system was a failure, and that the privileges granted to the employees would break down any railway. Yet we now find that it has been constructed on an average wage of 13s. 1d. per day for manual workers, and at a less cost per mile than a line which was built when navvies received only 6s. per day.

Senator SENIOR.—The honorable senator forgets that more machinery has been used in the construction of the east-west line.

Senator FERRICKS.—That is so; but, hitherto, none of these set-offs have been mentioned. The one cry has been that this was a desert railway, and would remain a white elephant for years. I quite recognise that it will not pay its way for many years. But we ought to construct national railways irrespective of such considerations. Australia should do as Canada has done—build railways for the

purpose of promoting settlement. That is the policy which should be followed in the Northern Territory. If no railway had been built in Australia until an immediate return from it was forthcoming, we should not have possessed the splendid railway systems that exist throughout the States to-day. The carping criticisms which have been directed against this line were never justified. The achievement of the employees engaged on its construction is a credit to them and to the officers in charge of the undertaking. I was pleased to hear the facts outlined by Senator Lynch to-day, because, no doubt, he has made a personal study of all the factors connected with this railway.

I have gone through the Bill very carefully, and I recognise that in it provision has been made for the launching of what will doubtless be a small Department for some years, but one which is, nevertheless, very necessary. There are one or two defects in the measure which I shall endeavour to rectify in Committee. Clause 4, for example, contains an anomaly in regard to the powers of the respective Houses. Then there is an omission from the Bill to which I have previously referred. It makes no provision for the abolition of the practice of giving gratuities to employees on Commonwealth railways.

Senator BAKHAP.—You are like the honorable senator with the land tax on that point.

Senator FERRICKS.—It is a point which will bear very serious examination at the present time. When I have raised it on previous occasions Senator Bakhap and others have been inclined to treat it lightly; but I shall endeavour in Committee to show that it has a more serious aspect than is generally believed.

Senator SENIOR.—That sort of thing is generally dealt with in the by-laws.

Senator FERRICKS.—Other provisions relating to travellers and employees are dealt with in the Bill, and I think I can show in Committee that there is a justification for the attitude I am going to take up. I am not keen on privileges to workers generally in the Railway or any other Department. Men should be paid for their services, and if they do not get enough, more should be given to them. But on this railway the circumstances will be different. Living conditions there for

some years will be very hard, and I hope and believe everything will be done to ameliorate the conditions of life for the employees there.

Senator Needham outlined an eighty-eight-hour fortnight, but I should prefer to see an eight-hour day and a forty-four-hour week. We had a forty-eight-hour week in operation on the Queensland railways and in the sugar mills, and it was given out there that we had virtually an eight-hour day. That was not so in practice, because they not only used to count an eight-hour day or a forty-eight-hour week, but a ninety-six-hour fortnight. Men were worked overtime sometimes two shifts on end, sometimes all day and half the night, and sometimes all day and all night, and in that way would accumulate a ninety-six-hour service in six or seven days. Then, instead of receiving overtime for the excess on that ninety-six hours for the remainder of the fortnight, they were calmly put off for two or three days on the plea of slackness, and other railway servants were expected to make up their work. The effect was to put additional work on all those who had not completed the ninety-six hours in the fortnight. I therefore want honorable senators that a ninety-six-hour fortnight, or even an eighty-eight-hour fortnight, is a delusion and a snare.

I do not agree with Senator Lynch's complaint regarding the powers proposed to be given to the Commissioner, and his advocacy of a wider and more untrammelled power. It is true that the Governor of the Commonwealth Bank has practically independent control, but there is a wide and significant difference, because a banking institution has not the many and varied industrial branches under its control that a railway department has. Although the Commissioner may be the fairest man possible, he may become headstrong, or obstinately imbued with the idea that his way of working is the only way, and inclined to back his one-man opinion against the combined opinions of others. That sort of thing would not be beneficial to the control of the system. We have had a little experience of that in the Government Departments in Queensland, although not so much in the railways. The Queensland railways have been for some time under a Commissioner, but we have not experienced in that branch of the service that autocracy which we found under other

departmental heads, who had almost supreme power, or power almost entirely dissociated from Parliament. One notable instance was the Police Department, which was ruled by a Commissioner with a rod of iron, virtually independently of Parliament. His retirement has brought about far better conditions in the police force than ever obtained when he was there.

Senator FOLL.—The Labour Government brought about his retirement because he did his duty in 1912.

The PRESIDENT.—Order! The honorable senator will not be in order in pursuing that subject.

Senator FERRICKS.—Our experience there is one reason why I do not advocate untrammelled power for the Commissioner under this Bill, as Senator Lynch does. Senator Lynch objects to what he calls the overriding of the Commissioner by the Minister, but the Bill, after all, is a machinery one, and it is reasonable that the Commissioner should consult with the Minister before he or anybody else exercises very wide powers. If his recommendations, and that is all they will be in actual practice, are not indorsed by the Minister, the matter will, if necessary, be ventilated in Parliament, when it will be seen whether the Commissioner or the Minister is right. The Bill has my cordial support, and, with the two exceptions I intend to deal with in Committee, is a very comprehensive and all-embracing measure for what will be, after all, only a small institution at the outset.

Senator DE LARGIE (Western Australia) [4.28].—I am better pleased at the tone of Senator Ferricks' speech than I have ever been with that of any other members of this Chamber from Queensland on this subject, and I congratulate him accordingly. I have a very lively recollection of the all-night sittings we used to have in this chamber on the question of the transcontinental railway, and the very prominent part which Queensland senators took in the debates. Some of them are no longer here, but others are still with us, and I compliment Senator Ferricks on introducing into the debate a much better tone than some of his colleagues, past or present, have ever done. The honorable senator undoubtedly showed a fairer spirit than we are accustomed to from Queensland senators when this subject is before the Chamber. You, Mr. President, will remember that when

any question appertaining to the trans-continental railway came before the Senate, the Queensland representatives made a dead set at it. They, however, were not the only offenders, because they were always heartily supported by the senators from Victoria. The opposition from Victoria was not confined to the Senate, for one influential Victorian newspaper, of a notoriously parochial character, always referred to this line as the "desert railway."

Senator RUSSELL.—Why abuse us because of our paper? We carried it for you.

Senator DE LARGIE.—I doubt whether Senator Russell was in the chamber when the Survey Bill was before us. The most strenuous battle was on that Bill. It is only fair that I should pay ex-Senator Findley the compliment of stating that he undoubtedly stood up against the opposition of the *Age* and its parochialism, and voted for this railway. But he was the only Victorian senator who supported it at that time.

Everything considered, we have reason to be thankful and to rejoice that at last we are nearing the completion of this very important railway. Various opinions have been expressed in the Senate regarding its necessity, and its prospects of becoming a commercial success, and ever since Parliament consented to its construction there have been very heated debates regarding the work itself. I assure Senator Ferricks that I am quite aware of the amount of blame attachable to the pick and shovel men, but the fault does not altogether lie with them. A great deal of the fault could be brought home to others, if we cared to go into the history of the line, but I hope we are done with the past. We have to consider the future of the railway, and I trust that we shall have better management than we have had so far. A great part of the previous failure to do as well as we might have done is attributable to the fact that those who were put into responsible positions resided too far away from where the work was going on. The most foolish proposition in connexion with the line was that the Engineer-in-Chief should reside, and have his head office, in Melbourne, while the work was going on thousands of miles away.

Senator SENIOR.—I am afraid that will be perpetuated under this Bill.

Senator DE LARGIE.—If it is, we cannot hope for success in running the railway. Unless the Commissioner lives on the job, or close to the work, and is able to supervise it, we can expect no better success in the future than we had in the past.

Senator Lt.-Colonel BOLTON.—How can he live at all the places?

Senator DE LARGIE.—He can live at one end of the railway or the other, and so be in touch with the work, but we cannot expect successful management if he manages from Melbourne a railway outside this State.

Senator MAUGHAN.—The Chief Engineer of a State does not live on the railway he is constructing.

Senator DE LARGIE.—He at least lives in the State. The honorable senator would not allow his Queensland Railways Commissioner to live in Melbourne. Even if he did, he would not be as far away from the works he was managing as would be a Commissioner who lived in Melbourne and managed a railway in Western Australia.

Senator REID.—But our Railways Commissioner situated in Brisbane is further away from the Gulf railways than the Commonwealth Commissioner would be from the Commonwealth lines.

Senator DE LARGIE.—I was thinking of Brisbane as the centre of control for the Queensland railways. Successful management can only be expected when the man who is controlling the railways lives as close as possible to his work.

Senator MAUGHAN.—But constructing engineers are living on the work.

Senator DE LARGIE.—They were all supposed to be construction engineers. It is quite true that, at both the Western Australian and South Australian ends, there are officials with staffs, but the head office is in Melbourne, so that there are three responsible officers, each with an adequate staff, and I am satisfied that if the construction of this line had been in the hands of a private contractor he would not have had three officials all more or less in control of the work, and employing enormous staffs.

Senator RUSSELL.—But would it not be better to have an officer in Melbourne for the purchase of materials and to carry out similar work?

Senator DE LARGIE.—It might and it might not be. I am criticising the work in the light of experience, and I

feel sure that unless the present policy is altered we cannot reasonably expect any greater measure of success in the future than we have achieved in the past. I want it to be understood, however, that in offering this criticism I am not blaming any particular Government, because all political parties have been responsible for a perpetuation of this faulty system of control. In many ways we can congratulate ourselves on the construction of this line. I am not going to say that everything done was a blunder. Many blunders were made, and these, I am safe in saying, were due to the fact that the Engineer-in-Chief—the man who, above all others, ought to have been on the spot—was living in Melbourne.

Senator MAUGHAN.—But the man who started this construction work was only a consulting engineer.

Senator DE LARGIE.—No. As a matter of fact, the first engineer was just as much an Engineer-in-Chief as is the present occupant of that office. When the project was initiated the Engineers-in-Chief of all the States, with the exception, I think, of Tasmania, were consulted. Therefore it could not be said that the Government of the day did not seek advice from the most likely sources. These gentlemen reported on the scheme, prepared estimates, and one of them was chosen as the Engineer-in-Chief.

Senator MAUGHAN.—Is it not a fact that Mr. Deane's estimate was not worth the paper it was written on?

Senator DE LARGIE.—While Mr. Deane's estimate was very wide of the mark, the same could be said of other estimates. As a matter of fact, Mr. O'Connor, who, I think, can be regarded as the most successful engineer in Western Australia, and who ought to have been in a better position to estimate the cost of this work, was also very much out in his figures. He estimated that the line would cost £4,400,000. Mr. Deane had two attempts. His first estimate was £3,988,000, and, subsequently, when more recent data were available, he put the cost at £4,044,000.

We have to bear in mind, in criticising the estimates of the Engineers-in-Chief, that it was understood the work would be carried out with the most modern appliances, and, in order to secure the best results, we introduced an American invention known as the track layer, which, according to Mr. Deane,

should have been able to lay from 2 to 6 miles of track per day over easy country such as is found on the transcontinental railway. There was never a better opportunity for a track-layer to produce good results than on this line; but, instead of laying from 2 to 6 miles a day, we have averaged only something like 1 mile per day.

Senator REID.—Why?

Senator DE LARGIE.—It would take a long while to tell that story, and I do not wish to detain the Senate. Once when I visited the construction work at a point over 300 miles from Kalgoorlie, I noticed that the men laid half-a-mile in one hour forty-five minutes. If they could do that, Mr. Deane's estimate of from 2 to 6 miles per day should have been well within the capacity of the track layer; but, as I have said, it only averaged 1 mile per day, equal only to the average rate on other lines in Western Australia with hand labour through similar country.

Senator REID.—We have done the same in Queensland over and over again.

Senator DE LARGIE.—It will be seen, therefore, that we gained nothing from the introduction of the track layer.

Senator GUY.—But would there not be a reduction in the number of hands employed?

Senator DE LARGIE.—I do not think there was, because a large number of men is required to attend to the track layer. If honorable senators will read Talbot's book on the construction of the great Canadian railways, they will find that construction work in that country averaged from 1 to 3 miles per day through very difficult country, including the crossing of great lakes, rivers, and mountain ranges; so we ought to have got more work out of the track layer on the trans-Australian line.

Senator GUY.—The honorable senator's remarks would lead one to the conclusion that there has been culpable negligence in supervision.

Senator DE LARGIE.—The trouble was due to something more than negligence in supervision. Any one interested in the construction of this line in its initial stages will remember that when we called for applications for the various positions, we had about 1,000 engineers applying for not more than half-a-dozen positions, and had tens of thousands of men seeking employment as timekeepers,

gangers, and storekeepers; but there was only one applicant for pick and shovel work.

Senator HENDERSON.—What did you expect the men to apply for?

Senator DE LARGIE.—I think we ought to get a V.C. especially made for that man who applied for the pick and shovel work. He deserves recognition, and I am glad to have the opportunity now to say a word of praise for him.

Now, on the business side of this line, I do not think we have finished with construction, because the railway is far from being complete. A glance at the railway map of Australia will convince any honorable senator that this is not a truly trans-Australian railway. As a matter of fact, it runs into a dead-end at either side, and if it is to be a business success, and if Australia is to get full benefit from the expenditure, the line should be continued on the Commonwealth gauge from Port Augusta to Broken Hill, and thus become linked up with the railway systems of New South Wales and Queensland. Brisbane and Sydney would then get some benefit from this undertaking, and if I were a representative of Queensland or New South Wales I would seek to have the connexion made with Broken Hill. Unless the course I suggest is followed, I see little hope of making a commercial success of the Kalgoorlie to Port Augusta railway.

Senator SENIOR.—There is a little bit of railway at the Western Australian end the gauge of which requires to be altered.

Senator DE LARGIE.—That is so, and there are two bits in South Australia which have to be changed to the standard gauge, in one case from a gauge of 3 ft. 6 in. and in the other from the 5 ft. 3 in.

Senator MAUGHAN.—What about that bit in Western Australia?

Senator DE LARGIE.—I do not shut my eyes to the defects at the western end any more than to those at the eastern end of the line, and I agree that the line from Kalgoorlie to Fremantle should as soon as possible be converted to the same gauge as that of the rest of the transcontinental line. I realize that there are serious financial obstacles at present in the way of remedying the breaks of gauge, but the line from Port Augusta to Broken Hill would be comparatively short, and by connecting these two points the distance to be travelled in linking up the west with the railway systems of New South

Wales and Queensland would be very considerably shortened. From Port Augusta to Sydney by the existing lines the distance is 1,324 miles, but if Port Augusta were linked up with the New South Wales system at Broken Hill, as I suggest, that distance would be reduced to 962 miles. If we consider the extension of the western line to connect with the Queensland system, I find that the distance from Port Augusta to Brisbane by existing lines is 2,049 miles, and by linking up the New South Wales system, as I have suggested, that distance could be reduced to 1,258 miles. Honorable senators will see that the adoption of this course would lead to a very considerable saving in the shortening of the line, in addition to the advantage that would be gained by overcoming the break of gauge.

In concluding my remarks on the second reading of the Bill, I express the hope that the Commonwealth Government will be able to lend assistance to all the States in linking up the Kalgoorlie to Port Augusta railway with their various railway systems. I do not mean to say that it is possible for us to take up this work now, but, perhaps, when the war is over and our soldiers have returned, and it becomes necessary for us to provide public works in order to employ the labour that will be cast upon the labour market at that time, we may be able to begin this work, and so do much towards the commercial success of the transcontinental line.

Senator REID (Queensland) [4.54].—As under this measure the Commonwealth Government propose, for the first time, to appoint a Commissioner to take charge of the railways under our control, it is perhaps just as well that each member of the Senate should say how, in his opinion, the Commissioner may be best able to carry out his work. I shall say nothing about the railways which are under the control of the Commonwealth Government, because I know nothing about them. I am pleased that it is intended to place them in the hands of a responsible person, and I am strongly of the opinion that the Commissioner, when appointed, should be entirely free from all political influence. From my experience of the working of railways in Queensland, and from the experience which one gains by reading of the control of railways in other countries, I am satisfied

that the best results are to be obtained by giving the Commissioner the utmost power, and making him entirely independent of political influence. It has been generally the experience of railway management throughout Australia that the best results have been obtained where the Railways Commissioner has had most power, and has been held solely responsible for his staff and the work they do. We have recently had some glaring instances to show that wherever Commissioners in charge of railways are interfered with in the carrying out of their duties, the result has been friction and trouble, to the great disadvantage of the public. I know of instances where a Railways Commissioner would have carried out reforms, beneficial alike to the railway employees and the public, and Ministers in power for but a short time have made concessions for party, sentimental, or foolish reasons of their own, which have cost the country thousands of pounds. The result has been, in the case of some railway systems, that, instead of paying, as they have done in the past, they represent at the present time a burden on the people. A Railways Commissioner, given full charge of the management of a railway system, becomes acquainted with the men under his control, learns their temperament, and understands their grievances. In Australia we must look to the development of the country by the extension of railways, and, after our present troubles are overcome, that is one great service which the Commonwealth Parliament will be called upon to perform. If our railways are managed on business lines to suit the community, as well as the employees, good results will accrue. The Railways Commissioner should have the fullest power to deal with all the grievances of his staff, and no outside influence should be permitted to come between him and the men under his control. I think that the Railways Commissioner should be placed in the position of a managing director of a private establishment. Under our legislation he would, no doubt, be guided by awards of Arbitration Courts and Wages Boards, and he should be given the power to deal directly with the railway employees. I do not wish to mention names, but I could cite instances in which the interference of a mere puppet of a poli-

Senator Reid.

tical party, in office for a few days or months, has had the effect of upsetting all the work previously done by a Railways Commissioner.

I do not know the country through which the Kalgoorlie to Port Augusta railway runs, but I was given some idea of its nature from the pictures exhibited in the Queen's Hall. I can speak of conditions affecting the railway systems of Queensland, where there are long distances between settlements. In this connexion I should like to direct attention to the necessity of affording employees upon our railway lines the best facilities possible for enabling their children to attend school. I have known little ones up to nine or ten years of age, the children of employees on railway lines in Queensland, having to get up at 6 o'clock in the morning to catch a train at 7 o'clock, and unable to get back home until 9 o'clock at night. It has often been a matter of wonder to me that some of them have been able to stand it. This difficulty has been to a great extent due to the conditions under which the employees on the railways have to live, and the distance between townships on some of the lines. Somewhat similar conditions will, no doubt, exist on the Commonwealth railways, and I trust that the Government will do all they can in these matters to treat railway employees and their families with every consideration. By doing so, they will make their employees more contented, and will benefit the children, who will naturally follow settlement along the railway lines.

Some reference has been made to the hours of labour of railway employees, and I am free to confess that an eight-hours day may be rather long, in view of the climate and conditions under which some of the men will be called upon to work. To meet this difficulty, I suggest that they should be given longer holidays and greater concessions, to enable them to get away for a time from their monotonous environment, and enjoy some of the benefits of civilization.

Senator NEEDHAM.—Working too long under unfavorable conditions, they may be too far run down in health to enjoy their holiday.

Senator REID.—I am not advocating long hours for railway employees, but I

do not think that the conditions upon any part of the Kalgoorlie to Port Augusta railway can be less favorable than are the conditions on some of the Queensland railways. One difficulty is that on some of the railway-lines, owing to the nature of the country and the scarcity of water, there is little or nothing that a railway employee can do in his leisure time. In some places where they live near a water-hole, they sometimes grow their own vegetables; but in parts of the country, where there is a great scarcity of water, they have to live a very monotonous life indeed. In such cases provision might be made for doubling their holidays, so as to give them a long spell away from the adverse conditions under which they are compelled to live for the greater part of the year.

Senator FERRICKS.—A fatal objection to that is that when accumulated leave becomes due, it is very rarely granted, in the Railway or any other Department.

Senator REID.—So far as I can learn from personal inquiries concerning the working of its Public Service, the Commonwealth has not allowed holidays to be accumulated in the same way as the States have done, and then robbed the employees of their holidays. I am informed that our Public Service Commissioner compels the employees to take their holiday leave whenever the date comes round. A man is simply notified of the date when his holiday leave is to start, and he has to take the leave. Wherever a system is established, it can be worked easily.

Senator FERRICKS.—Then if a railway worker could not afford to go for a break at the end of the year, would he have worked all those extra hours for nothing?

Senator REID.—A man with a family has to keep himself wherever he lives. If he cannot make some provision to go away for a break, then he can stop at home.

Senator FERRICKS.—Would you make a man lose the extra time which he had worked during the year?

Senator REID.—No. I would give the time to him, and if he liked to stop at his own home, he could do so. I would grant to the men any reasonable concession to go somewhere from their homes in order to enjoy a break.

Senator NEEDHAM.—Would you not rather give a man shorter hours?

Senator REID.—No. Queensland furnishes a very good example of the fact that if a man is given shorter hours, he goes to his home, and does not know what to do with the time.

Senator FERRICKS.—How would a man know what to do with extended leave at Christmas time if he could not afford to go for a trip with his wife and family?

Senator REID.—That will be an exceptional case.

Senator NEEDHAM.—No; it will be the rule.

Senator REID.—I think not. In the interval the men can save their money. They are to be allowed a free railway pass, and that I think is a great concession. All that they will have to do will be to take themselves somewhere.

Senator FERRICKS.—You know that a man cannot travel with a wife and family at the same cost as he could live at home with them.

Senator REID.—No. I believe that unless, unfortunately, he has had serious family trouble, the average man will be in a position to save sufficient money to enable him to go and enjoy a break in a centre of civilization. I might mention that the personal inquiries I made had relation to the employees in the Post and Telegraph Department. From my experience in Queensland, I know exactly what it is for a man to live under ordinary conditions. I would not ask any man to work for more than eight hours a day, but I would give him extra leave during the year. It must be remembered that, as a rule, the homes of these railway employees are not pretentious. There will be no township from one end of the transcontinental line to the other. An employee cannot even run into a township on a trolley and enjoy a change, because there will be no township. Therefore, it is more necessary to give the men longer breaks. I do not know what sort of country the line traverses. If the land is good, it will lead to settlement, and townships will grow up. But there will always be long breaks, and the comfort of the employees should be considered from that point of view, as I trust it will. Above all things, I am strongly in favour of giving drastic powers to the Commissioner, making him the sole individual responsible for running the railway system on behalf of the country, and without political influence.

Senator NEEDHAM.—Would you leave Parliament out altogether?

Senator REID.—Through the political head the Commissioner will have to submit a report to Parliament, and it can discuss its contents in any way it likes.

Senator NEEDHAM.—The damage might be done before Parliament received the report.

Senator REID.—My own experience teaches me that a wise head of any Department is more willing to create reforms than is a Parliament composed of a number of persons who know nothing about the Department, and who simply talk to their constituents and to the gallery half the time. In my opinion a wise Commissioner who studies the public interest and treats the employees well is the best servant of the State.

Senator FERRICKS.—Who is to be the judge of whether he is acting wisely?

Senator REID.—I would be more willing to trust to the wisdom of the Commissioner than to trust to the so-called wisdom of the Senate or any other branch of the Legislature.

Senator NEEDHAM.—What is the good of Parliament, then? Abolish it!

Senator REID.—The function of Parliament is to make laws.

Senator PEARCE.—And to voice grievances.

Senator REID.—I am afraid that its function is more to hear grievances than to pass laws. I believe in national effort. I expect that, after the war, more national effort will be put forth in Australia than has ever been done before, in spite of any Conservative tendency to bolster up private enterprise. I think that, when the war is over, Australia will have to do a great deal from the national point of view, and, holding that belief, I consider that, from a business stand-point, all departmental heads should be left free to carry on the work of their Departments in a business-like way; they should be vested with strong powers to act on their own responsibility, and when their reports have been laid on the table here the voice of Parliament can be heard.

Senator SENIOR (South Australia) [5.15].—I welcome this Bill, because I think it is extremely necessary. The construction of the east-west railway has been variously criticised. Very often it has been condemned on *ex parte* evidence,

and very frequently the conclusions arrived at by its critics have been altogether beside the mark. No railway in Australia was ever laid under such difficulties as confronted the construction of the transcontinental line. When it was begun, there was peace in the world, and the results which have accrued from the war have very materially enhanced the cost of construction; much more so, perhaps, than we can recognise at present, not only in regard to the obtaining of material, but also in regard to the manufacture of rolling-stock and its transportation to the line. At almost every point along the routes there have been cases of increased cost, which it was not possible to foresee when construction work was started. I know that, in connexion with the surveys, allowance was made in many cases for having to cart water for an extreme distance. Not only from the pictures which we saw screened in the Queen's Hall the other night, but from reports which have been laid on the table, and from statements in the press, we know that unforeseen difficulties have occurred in that way. Where water was expected to be got, it was not found. Costly bores had to be put down, and all this work has to be charged against the railway. Very often the line has been made the text of a severe homily. It has been held up as an undertaking in which Australia ought not to have dabbled.

Not only is it an absolute necessity that the east should be connected with the west from the national point of view, but it is equally necessary that the south should be connected with the north by railway. When the construction of the Oodnadatta railway was begun, it was not intended that it should end at that point. It was only by a mere fluke in connexion with State politics that it ended there. It was really begun as a section of a line which was projected to go beyond the Macdonnell Ranges. Had that idea been carried out, there would have been no complaint about the railway being a costly failure. It has been stated very often that the taking over of the section has been a costly affair to the Commonwealth. But would not the taking over of the chamber in which we are assembled be a costly failure if, for instance, only the pillars had been erected and no roof had been put on? Would it not be a costly thing if we had to finish

the construction of a chamber like this if only one-half of it had been erected? Practically, the National Parliament took over the Oodnadatta railway under similar conditions. Every person who has been beyond the Macdonnell Ranges, and explored the country, will acknowledge that there are large areas of very fertile land to be seen. It is from that point onward that we may expect the railway to pay.

I am making these remarks because the Commissioner who will be appointed under the Bill will have charge of these railways. If success is to be expected from his administration, the Commissioner certainly should live nearer to his work than Melbourne is.

Senator NEEDHAM.—Where would you put him?

Senator SENIOR.—Having regard to the position of the two railways, I should say that he ought to be located somewhere near Port Augusta.

Senator NEEDHAM.—What about Naretha?

Senator SENIOR.—Not at such a distance as that. He would then be at a point where he would have the junction of the two longest railways under his control. From Port Augusta he would be able to travel on either of those lines and to overlook the work immediately under his charge. I think we may congratulate ourselves that the cost of the east-west line has not been more excessive, in view of the method that has been adopted in the management of its construction. In any private enterprise for a manager to reside so far away from the activities which he had to supervise would be an unthinkable proposition.

Senator FERRICKS.—The Chief Engineer of a State does not go out and personally supervise each railway that is being built.

Senator SENIOR.—But frequently he goes over the line that is being constructed—assuming, of course, that it is under his supervision, and is not being built by contract. But in this instance the persons charged with the construction of the line scarcely ever met the man who supervised the work. Then the costly head works on the east-west line constitute a charge which makes the total outlay appear larger than it otherwise would. For instance, the construction of a mechanical branch for the building

of carriages and locomotives has been made a charge on this particular railway—a charge which, in my judgment, should be distributed over other Commonwealth railways. These facts are hidden from the public gaze, and the cost of the undertaking is held up as a horrible example of the evils of construction under the existing system. But, as Senator Ferricks has very properly pointed out, this east-west line has a wider gauge than has the Oodnadatta line; it carries heavier rails, and the cost of the materials used in its construction has been considerably higher. Other circumstances, too, have helped to swell the bill.

Senator NEEDHAM.—For lack of material men have had to be dismissed.

Senator SENIOR.—When the cost of the east-west line is compared with that of the Oodnadatta line I venture to suggest that the conditions in the two cases are not altogether alike. On the Oodnadatta line there are two bridges, one of which is almost as long as is the Murray Bridge, and was quite as costly. It spans a river at a very great height, and the wonder to me is that it remains there without more injury being done to it. The carriage of materials used in the construction of that bridge to the point where it has been erected made a very great surcharge on the cost of the line.

Senator FERRICKS.—The Oodnadatta line was constructed by contract.

Senator SENIOR.—Yes. But when honorable senators refer to that railway as a white elephant I would remind them that they have an opportunity of making it a payable concern. Viewing the matter from a national stand-point, it is our bounden duty—as soon as circumstances will permit—to convert that undertaking, which is now a dead failure, into a remunerative proposition, by pushing forward with the construction of the north-south line. Senator de Largie has suggested that that line ought not to stop at Port Augusta, but that it should be connected by the same gauge with the New South Wales railway system. If it be necessary to do that, it is equally necessary that the 5-ft. 3-in. and the 3-ft. 6-in. gauges, which link up with the Port Augusta portion of the line, should, as speedily as possible, be converted into a uniform gauge. We ought to view these

matters from the stand-point of the Commonwealth as a whole. If the time should ever come when we have to defend Australia these breaks of gauge will be a serious disability in moving troops from one point to another.

I have studied the Bill carefully, and I cannot see that it can be very much improved. As a matter of fact, the Railways Commissioner to be appointed should be vested with very large powers—certainly with more powers than have been conferred upon the State Railways Commissioners. Reverting to the point mentioned by Senator Reid, I say that anybody acquainted with the tract of country traversed by this line will recognise that it is not a place in which men will desire to spend their spare time. If provision be made in this measure to extend the period of recreation granted to employees on the line as long as practicable, they will welcome the time when they can return to civilization. It must be remembered that on all the railways of Australia concession tickets are granted to employees.

Senator NEEDHAM. — And their wages are cut down commensurately.

Senator SENIOR.—The honorable senator is labouring under a delusion.

Senator NEEDHAM.—I have worked on the railways, and I know that I received less money because of those privileges.

Senator SENIOR.—The concessions of which I speak are not debited against the work that a man does. I know that my friends on the railways have received wages equal to what they would have received in private employ, plus the concessions which are granted to themselves and their families.

Senator NEEDHAM.—When working on the railways I received 6d. per day less than I would have done, as a set-off against such concessions.

Senator SENIOR.—Then I can assure my honorable friend that that experience is not general.

Senator NEEDHAM.—The same system is operating in every State in Australia today.

Senator SENIOR.—I can say that it is not operating in South Australia.

Senator NEEDHAM.—It is operating in every State.

Senator SENIOR. — I differ from the honorable senator. I say that the railway employee receives a wage equal to that of the man in private employ who

is engaged on the same class of work, plus the concessions which he gets each year.

Senator NEEDHAM.—The honorable senator will find that under certain regulations in connexion with this railway the practice of which I speak is in force to-day.

Senator SENIOR.—I do not object to the granting of these privileges to railway employees.

Senator NEEDHAM.—But when those employees pay for them, they cannot be called privileges.

Senator SENIOR. — I shall require proof of the accuracy of the honorable senator's statement.

Senator FERRICKS.—What is the object of these privileges, save to get men to work for less pay?

Senator SENIOR.—Under the arrangement which they make with the Railways Commissioners they are obliged to go wherever they may be sent. As a result, many men have to work under conditions very different from those which obtain near our cities. These concessions are earned by them, and it will be a revelation to me to learn that their value is deducted from the wages of the employees.

I do hope that the Railways Commissioners will constantly keep in mind the necessity for locating married men with families as near as possible to the centres of population, in order that their children may be afforded an opportunity of acquiring a decent education. In this connexion we have to remember that they are not merely the parents' children, but the children of the nation. In them the nation has an asset that it must look after, just as much as must the parents.

Senator FERRICKS.—The pictures which were shown in the Queen's Hall the other evening disclosed that a start has already been made in that direction.

Senator SENIOR.—But the educational facilities which have been provided are few and far between. I hope that these facilities will be forthcoming, because it is only under such conditions that we can expect men to undertake the work which will be required of them upon this line. I welcome the Bill, and trust that its passage will result in better management than has obtained in the past.

Senator NEWLAND (South Australia) [5.36].—I welcome the advent of the Bill. A good deal of adverse opinion has been expressed as to the wisdom at the present time of adding to the general cost of government by creating a Department to

control our railways instead of handing over the work to the States which are more closely linked up with them. A large number of people are of opinion that it would be well to permit South Australia and Western Australia to control and work the east-west line; but I am satisfied that the difficulties would be great and the result unsatisfactory, and that ultimately a Railways Commissioner and staff would have to be called into existence at a time when probably a good deal of damage had been done. The railway is about to be opened, and it is well that its control should be in the hands of Commonwealth officials from the very commencement. The Commonwealth is in possession of small sections of railways scattered in very remote portions of Australia. These include the railway from east to west, which is on the verge of completion, the line in the Northern Territory, the line from Oodnadatta to Port Augusta, and a line in the Federal Territory at Canberra. There will be a considerable amount of difficulty in working these railways even with the management that has been proposed, so I welcome the arrangement to put them at any rate under one head. At the same time I foresee considerable difficulty, because it will be necessary to appoint a responsible official in direct connexion with each of those railway systems, who will be able to represent the Commissioner for the time being, and settle disputes promptly before they become serious. That will add considerably to the cost, because a responsible official of that class must receive a fairly generous salary.

It would seem at first blush that the right place for the head-quarters of the Railways Department would be at Port Augusta or Kalgoorlie—Port Augusta for choice, at the most central place, and as the junction of the two most important sections of the Commonwealth railways. That would be all right but for the fact that we have the other railways to which I have referred, and the Railways Commissioner could not live in three places at once. From that view-point it does not seem so material that the railway head-quarters should be at any place other than the head-quarters of the Commonwealth Government, and for that reason I must admit that the right place is Melbourne. When the Seat of Government is removed from Melbourne it will be

time enough to consider the question of removing the railway head-quarters. Judging by the progress we are making in that direction, that question is not likely to trouble any of the present members of the Senate.

The details of the management of the railways will be provided for by by-laws. This is largely a machinery Bill appointing a Railways Commissioner and calling his staff into existence, but the method of dealing with the employees will be settled by by-laws.

Senator DE LARGIE.—Who will make the by-laws?

Senator NEWLAND.—That is the point. The by-laws regarding the management of the railways and the relationship of members of Parliament with the railway employees are of much more consequence even than this Bill. The Railways Commissioner will have to frame the by-laws relating to the staff generally.

I am concerned with one or two clauses whose intention is not quite clear. I am not sure that clause 52 protects as thoroughly as it should the rights of railway employees taken over from the States. A considerable number have come over from the service of the South Australian Government. They were for many years in the South Australian railways, and, having acquired considerable experience, were the very men the Commonwealth wanted. I am concerned as to whether their rights are properly safeguarded by the Bill. When they were taken over they were promised that they would not suffer in status or in any other way, and that any rights accruing to them under the State would be honoured by the Commonwealth on their retirement. The Public Service Act makes it abundantly clear that when a Department or an employee is taken over all accruing rights are safeguarded. No doubt the Commonwealth Government is anxious to fulfil every promise it has made to these railway servants, and I am simply raising the point so that the Minister may see before the Bill is finally passed, or before the regulations are framed, that their rights, existing or accruing, are thoroughly safeguarded. The same thing was done in the Northern Territory Acceptance Act, which specifically provides that every officer transferred to the Northern Territory shall have his rights and privileges secured to him. I trust the Minister will

see that this Bill is made as complete in that respect as the Public Service Act and the Northern Territory Acceptance Act.

I am glad that the Government, in framing the Bill, have taken the precaution to appoint an Appeal Board. In a Railway Service mistakes are made, and accidents occur, and the fault is sometimes more that of the Department than of the individual employee, who may be working under unfavorable conditions or with inferior appliances. He may be punished, whereas the punishment should really be shared by the officers of the Department who have not provided him with proper facilities for performing his duty. The Appeal Board is being constituted in a way of which I entirely approve. The chairman is to be a police or stipendiary magistrate. I have been connected with railways for a number of years, and for some years I was the employees' representative on the Appeal Board in South Australia. From the very inception of that Board we asked that the chairman should be a magistrate, but that request has not yet been granted, so I am glad to note that the Commonwealth Government have at the outset taken the right course of appointing an independent outside chairman, who, from his experience and knowledge, can sift evidence and guide those associated with him in returning a verdict on the facts and not on suppositions. The Commissioner is empowered to appoint a representative and the employees are to appoint theirs. Quite a number of railway people think there should be one representative of the men from each branch of the Department on these Boards, but, in my opinion, that would be unnecessary, because one man would soon become expert in dealing with cases that come before him, and if he took any interest in his work and possessed ordinary ability, he would be able to do very good service for the employees.

Clause 54 of the Bill provides for the retirement of employees at the age of 65 years, or, if they desire to retire earlier, at 60 years. I regret that no provision is included for a superannuation fund, because a railway employee, as a rule, is not in possession of a competence at the retiring age, and if he has been in the service for a considerable time, he is to some extent unsuited for any other occupation. I should like to see a fund established

for the reason that it would have the effect of making a man stick to his job. If a man has been paying for a certain number of years into a superannuation fund, he will have more than a working interest in the Railways Department, and will be able to look forward to the enjoyment of certain privileges, provided partly from his own contributions and partly from the contributions of the Government, when he reaches the retiring age.

Senator RUSSELL.—That would apply to all other civil servants, too.

Senator NEWLAND.—It does not apply to the running staff on the railways. The officers or the men on the salaried list may, or they may not, have a superannuation fund. I know that until quite lately South Australian railway officers had no such fund.

Senator ROWELL.—There is such a fund in the Education Department of South Australia.

Senator RUSSELL.—There ought to be a national scheme covering the whole of the Commonwealth civil servants.

Senator NEWLAND.—I agree with the Minister that something of that kind should be done, and I think it would be wise to have a scheme for the Railway Service established at once, because in the course of a few years the Commonwealth will be employing a large number of men.

Something has been said about leave, which, I have no doubt, will be determined when the regulations are being framed, and I hope it will be on a generous scale, because, as a rule, all our railway servants will be situated in the interior of Australia, where men are obliged to put up with much greater hardships than employees of the State Railway Services. Moreover, there is no prospect of any transfer to a seaboard or to places where men live in ease and luxury compared with the conditions in the interior. On that account the railway men should receive every consideration in the matter of leave. I believe it is the practice in most of the States, where men are living a certain distance from headquarters, to grant them a few days' extra leave to cover the time occupied in the journey from their place of employment to headquarters. Men engaged anywhere between Quorn and Oodnadatta should, I think, get considerably more time than the few days occupied in travelling by train, from their stations to headquarters,

Senator Newland.

and I trust the Commonwealth Government will frame by-laws concerning leave on a scale more generous than that obtaining in the State Railway Services.

Some reference was made to the question of linking up the Commonwealth lines with the railways of the various States on a uniform gauge, and in this connexion I point out that the South Australian Government are building a direct line on the 5-ft. 3-in. gauge to Port Augusta. In view of this, action, it seems to me the Commonwealth Government should at once enter into negotiations with the South Australian authorities to induce them to build the line to Port Augusta on the 4-ft. 8½-in. gauge. A great deal of fault has been found with the Western Australian authorities because they have not carried out their part of the agreement by linking up Kalgoorlie with Fremantle on the 4-ft. 8½-in. gauge. Perhaps, from the financial stand-point, there may be some justification for this omission, but in the case of South Australia, a line is actually under construction on the 5-ft. 3-in. gauge, and I understand that the section from Salisbury to Long Plains is about completed, so it is advisable for the Commonwealth Government to communicate with the Government of South Australia, and intimate that if this line is not built on the 4-ft. 8½-in. gauge, a Commonwealth line on the standard gauge will be built, if necessary, alongside the one now in course of construction. This kind of thing must not be fooled with any further. The people of Australia have been humbugged by inefficient railway engineers right from the inauguration of railway construction in this country. Inefficient engineers, Inter-State jealousies, and all manner of things have combined to interfere with the proper development of Australian railway policy, but the Federal Government now have an opportunity of preventing a repetition of this trouble in South Australia.

Senator Colonel ROWELL.—But the difficulty would be as pronounced with a 4-ft. 8½-in. line, because there would be the break of gauge at Adelaide.

Senator NEWLAND.—Any hardship caused by the break of gauge would not be so appreciable at a capital city as elsewhere. It is true there would be the expense of transferring goods, but passengers and live-stock, in any case, would require a rest and change at Adelaide,

and, as a rule, passengers are accustomed to make a stay of a few hours at a capital city.

Senator NEEDHAM.—But there would still be the same difficulty in the transportation of men and material for defence purposes.

Senator NEWLAND.—We are committed to that in any case; but if we make the break of gauge at the principal centres, it will not be so objectionable as at outlying stations such as Port Augusta or Kalgoorlie. I hope this matter will be stressed, and that the Commonwealth will take immediate action.

I want now to refer to the question of accommodation on the trains. We have been told that the rolling-stock on the transcontinental railway will be superior to anything in the Commonwealth, and that sleeping cars will be provided for both first and second class passengers. That is quite a proper thing to do, because passengers could not undertake a journey across Australia without sleeping accommodation.

Senator DE LARGIE.—We already have first and second class sleeping accommodation on the Western Australian lines.

Senator NEWLAND.—We have been told, also, that dining cars will be provided, and that both first and second class passengers will have their meals in the same car. This should overcome the objections raised regarding the cost of meals on some of the dining cars on State railways.

Senator BAKHAP.—The cost of berths on most of the Australian trains compares very unfavorably with the cost in other countries.

Senator NEWLAND.—My experience is that they are cheaper than in any other part of the world.

Senator BAKHAP.—You can get better accommodation on the Malay Peninsula railways for 2s 4d. than on the Australian lines.

Senator NEWLAND.—I have no fault to find with the dining-car accommodation proposed, as first and second class passengers are to dine together in the same car, and as it will be almost impossible for passengers to take with them sufficient food for the long journey from Port Augusta to Kalgoorlie; and further, as it is not likely that many refreshment-rooms will be established along the line for some years to come, I trust that the tariff fixed

for a meal in the dining-car will be well within the means of any person who may be travelling on that railway.

Senator NEEDHAM.—Will there not be some difficulty about taking something besides food on trains travelling on that railway?

Senator NEWLAND.—I was coming to that.

We shall be catering on the railway for passengers from all parts of the world. We are inclined in Australia to think that we are the only people on earth, and that, so long as we are satisfied ourselves, it does not matter a rap whether other people are satisfied or not. In the conduct of this railway the Government should do what is necessary to suit the convenience and the likes and dislikes of the passengers who will travel over it. I blame the Government for having very weakly consented to withdraw from this Bill a clause which provided for liquor being obtained on trains travelling over this line. Passengers travelling over this line will undertake the driest and most uncomfortable railway journey in Australia, and, in the circumstances, it is regrettable that the Government should have yielded to the demands of a few persons who would prevent a man from having a glass of liquor, whether he needs it or not.

Senator THOMAS.—Nobody ever needs it.

Senator NEWLAND.—I can tell the honorable senator that I sometimes need it, and then I like to be able to get it.

Senator THOMAS.—No liquor can be obtained on trains on the Canadian-Pacific railway now.

Senator DE LARGIE.—It could be obtained on that railway when the honorable senator travelled over it last year.

Senator NEWLAND.—That may be; but Senator Thomas evidently did not know where to find it.

Senator THOMAS.—Liquor cannot be obtained on trains on the Canadian-Pacific railway to-day, under the law of the land.

Senator NEWLAND.—I have received quite a large number of letters from well-intentioned people, who have asked me, under any and all circumstances, to oppose any clause being inserted in this Bill to provide for the sale of liquor on trains. These people have a

perfect right to correspond with public men on these matters, and I have just the same right to say whether I am disposed to comply with their request. I regret that such a clause is not to be found in the Bill, and that the Government should have yielded to the pressure of these people to withdraw the provision. To permit the sale of liquor on trains travelling over this railway would be a great convenience to 90 per cent. of those who will make use of it, and who have been accustomed to a convenience of the kind upon long railway journeys. Because liquor is not supplied on trains in Australia, people have to go to refreshment rooms to get what they want, and some of them get more than is good for them, whilst the article supplied is not always of the best quality.

Senator NEEDHAM.—The clause which has been withdrawn can be reinserted in the measure.

Senator NEWLAND.—I should be glad to see it reinserted. We should be above the paltry ideas of those who think that, because a man here and there takes a little too much liquor, every man should be debarred from its reasonable use. Passengers over the Commonwealth railways should be given the opportunity to obtain a glass of grog, if they want it, just as our teetotal friends are able to obtain a cup of tea. If they were prevented from obtaining a cup of tea, they would set up such a howl as would shake the Empire to its foundations. It is a matter for regret that too many persons take more liquor than is good for them, but that is no reason why a man who takes liquor, because he feels that he needs it, should be debarred from the opportunity of obtaining it on trains running over Commonwealth railways.

Senator BAKHAP.—It is being served out every day to our soldiers in the trenches.

Senator NEWLAND.—Any one working in this building may go across the street at any time of the day to get a glass of liquor if he thinks that he needs it, and it is most unfair that passengers crossing a desert on a journey of two or three days by train should be prevented from obtaining liquor if they desire to have it because two or three persons living in Melbourne have so decided. It is unfair to the travelling public that the

Government should have so weakly yielded to the demands of these people.

I am glad that the Bill has been introduced, and, generally speaking, I commend the Government upon its introduction. It seems to me that all practically necessary provisions are included. Much, no doubt, will depend on the by-laws framed under this measure, but the Senate will later have an opportunity to say whether it approves of those by-laws.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee:

Clause 1 (Short title).

Senator NEEDHAM (Western Australia) [6.15].—I think that possibly on this clause we may discuss the question of the unification of gauges, which was dealt with by Senator Newland.

The CHAIRMAN.—The break of gauges has nothing to do with the title of the Bill.

Senator NEEDHAM.—I may be out of order, but I do not like the way in which you, sir, have told me that I am out of order. I think a little more courtesy might be extended from the Chair to an honorable senator who is addressing the Committee.

The CHAIRMAN.—I had no wish to be discourteous to the honorable senator.

Senator NEEDHAM.—I was really asking whether I would be in order in discussing the unification of gauges on this clause.

The CHAIRMAN.—I do not think the honorable senator will be in order in doing so.

Senator RUSSELL.—In dealing with the matter on the second reading I referred to the same length of line as that referred to by Senator Newland.

Senator NEEDHAM.—I wish to speak on the general question. I do not think we should be debarred from discussing it.

Senator RUSSELL.—This Bill has nothing to do with the question of gauges.

Senator NEEDHAM.—It occurred to me that if it was in order to discuss the question on the second reading of the Bill it should be in order to refer to it in Committee. It may be possible to discuss it upon some other clause if the Chairman rules that it cannot be discussed on clause 1.

The CHAIRMAN.—I rule that it is not in order to discuss that question on this clause.

Clause agreed to.

Clauses 2 to 11 agreed to.

Clause 12—

(1) The Minister may remove any Commissioner from office on an address praying for his removal being presented to the Governor-General by the Senate and the House of Representatives respectively in the same session of the Parliament or by the House of Representatives alone in two consecutive sessions thereof: Provided that not less than six weeks have intervened between such addresses when made by the House of Representatives alone.

Senator FERRICKS (Queensland) [6.20].—I take exception to the latter part of sub-clause 1 on the ground that in certain circumstances it gives exclusive power to the House of Representatives. It has always to be remembered that that House has powers co-ordinate with the powers of the Senate, except as provided in the Constitution itself. It is not only from that very important stand-point that I take exception to this provision, but also because I hold that in regard to the alteration of the Constitution the Senate has equal powers with the other House.

Senator BAKHAP.—They cannot remove a Judge on these terms.

Senator FERRICKS.—No. It is not captious opposition which I am offering on account of what might be termed the subordination of the Senate to the other House, although that is a very important matter indeed. There is another equally important, if not more vital, objection to the provision, and that is from the point of view of State rights. The Senate is essentially a States House. While we are keenly divided on party matters when contentious measures are under discussion, we do, I think without any exception, endeavour to view matters from a State as well as a National perspective, and when there is no conflict the National view very often prevails. Let me point out now where a danger to the rights of some of the States might come from the enactment of this provision. Take the representation of the States in the House of Representatives, which alone is to be invested with this extraordinary power. New South Wales has twenty-seven representatives; Victoria, twenty-two; South Australia, seven; Western Australia, five; Queensland, ten; and Tasmania, five. It will be possible for a Commissioner in charge of the construction of railways to bring about a system,

not knowingly perhaps, but in his judgment or wisdom, which would be very beneficial to the conduct of the railways, but which would bear very harshly on some of the States. In illustration of what I mean, take the case outlined by Senator de Largie this afternoon. The proposal to link up Port Augusta with Broken Hill, and eventually with Sydney, might be a very good one. I am not saying that I would oppose the project; in fact, I would support the building of railways anywhere, because I am a firm believer in them. But, for the sake of illustrating the danger which I hold lies in this clause, suppose that such a linking up were made. There would be three States involved; New South Wales, South Australia, and Western Australia would be directly concerned, even apart from the National aspect in which every State in the Commonwealth would be involved. It would be possible for the representatives of those three States in the other House, by reason of the majority they commanded—they would number thirty-nine members—to bring such influence upon any Minister in respect of what might be a non-party question that it would result in a certain line of attitude being followed by the Railways Commissioner to the advantage of those three States, and to the detriment of the other three States.

Progress reported.

Sitting suspended from 6.26 to 8 p.m.

AUSTRALIAN REPRESENTATION AT WASHINGTON.

Debate resumed from 26th July (*vide* page 511), on motion by Senator BAKHAP—

That, in the opinion of the Senate, if the consent of the Imperial Government can be obtained to the action being taken, it is desirable that a High Commissioner for Australia should be accredited to the United States Government at Washington.

Senator MILLEN (New South Wales—Vice-President of the Executive Council) [8.2].—I would like to compliment the honorable senator who submitted this motion upon bringing before the Chamber a matter which is distinctly timely, and distinctly important. In the form in which it has been presented, however, I would point out that it is a double-barrelled motion. It asks the Senate to express approval of the appointment of an

Australian representative in the United States of America, and it also indicates the status which, in the opinion of the mover of the motion, ought to be accorded to that representative. I propose to leave the second aspect of this matter for the present, and to deal only with the first.

Regarding the general proposition that it is advisable that Australia should be represented in America, I think the Senate will generally be in agreement, as the Government is, with the opinion expressed by Senator Bakhap. But I would remind honorable senators that, during the stirring events which exercised our minds a few months ago, the Prime Minister addressed himself to the desirableness, and, indeed, the necessity, of a systematic and organized effort being made to expand the trade and industries of Australia. When dealing with that subject at Bendigo, he expressed the opinion—

To do that, we must have the brightest intellects at our disposal, who shall go out into every quarter of the world where Australian products can find a market, and develop and open up fresh opportunities for us. In those few lines may be set out the policy of the Government in this regard. But, apart from it being the policy of the Government, I feel that it is one with which every honorable senator will find himself heartily in accord. Amongst the many things which the war is teaching us is that our comparative isolation has gone, and that no nation is strong enough, or big enough, to proceed upon its way quite regardless of fellow nations. Perhaps our national pride has been a little touched by the indications which have come to us with some frequency as to how little Australia is known abroad. These reminders may take the shape of a stray line in a newspaper cable column, or a casual observation by a visitor here. But it has been borne in upon us that Australia is not known amongst other nations, and particularly in America, as she desires to be known, and as it is to our interests that she should be known. The war has given us a costly but a glorious advertisement, and I venture to say, as the result of what our soldiers have accomplished on the battle-fields of Europe, Australia is infinitely better known now than she was when this war broke out.

It is three years since we were confronted with the announcement of

war. During that period Australia has grown much older. One of the things we have learned since the outbreak of war is how interdependent nations are, not only in matters of trade, but in all those other matters which have so seriously engaged our attention during the past three years. There are growing indications that, whilst we are looking abroad, other nations are bending their gaze in our direction. A cable was recently published which demonstrates the accuracy of my statement. This cable gives some statements from the *New York Times*. Upon the authority of that newspaper, it says—

Mr. Stanley Rose, Chief of the Government Bureau of Commerce in New York, makes most favorable comment on the large amount of foreign trade which Australia enjoyed in 1916, despite the most severe strain of the war. Mr. Rose predicts a further increase for 1917, basing this on the statement of the figures in the crop reports from the American Consul-General in Sydney, Mr. Joseph Brittain.

I pause here to point out that other nations are beginning to look closely to Australia, and to its possibilities in the matter of trade. I accept these newspaper reports as gratifying evidence of that growing interest, and as an indication that we ought to be up and doing in order that we may supply the complement to the action described in the words I have just read.

It is added by Mr. Rose that the United States has recently been most interested in Australian trade possibilities, especially in view of Japan's increased trade to Australia.

All this is obvious, demonstrating that we have a trade here of which it is worth the while of the great American Republic to take notice.

But we have an interest in this matter more direct than have the Americans themselves. We have now reached that stage when we are over-supplying our own market in many particulars, and when, with no desire to lose the British market, we still feel under an obligation to ascertain what trade possibilities there may be in other directions. Now there is no nation in the world which has such purchasing power as has America. Just how big it is may be demonstrated by reminding honorable senators of the population of that country. To state it at 100,000,000 is sufficiently accurate for the purpose of my argument. There we have a market represented by

the absorbing power of 100,000,000 souls. Now what trade have we been doing with them? In looking at the figures, I have been struck by the tremendous jump which has been made since the war broke out. In the year preceding the outbreak of war, we supplied America with £2,630,000 worth of goods, which represented, roughly, 6d. per head of her population. In the year 1915-16, America purchased from us goods to the value of £17,650,000.

Senator O'KEEFE.—Those figures include all raw materials, and embrace all kinds of metals?

Senator MILLEN.—I have not gone into the details, but we may rest assured that the bulk of that amount is made up of raw materials. That, however, is the most profitable form of production in which we are engaged to-day. It will be seen, therefore, that in the short space of two years our trade with America has expanded by £15,000,000.

Senator THOMAS.—Can the Vice-President of the Executive Council give us the figures relating to our imports from America?

Senator MILLEN.—I am merely showing what America has bought from us, and how big and profitable a customer she is becoming. I am not suggesting that this trade is permanently ours, because it has arisen out of the stress of war.

Senator FERRICKS.—What does it mean per head of the American population?

Senator MILLEN.—Prior to the outbreak of war, America purchased from us goods to the value of 6d. per head of her population, whereas last year she purchased goods to the value of 3s. 7d. per head. Included in the figures I have given is £7,500,000 worth of gold which was sent there no doubt as part payment by Australia of remittances due to Great Britain. But even if we excluded that amount, America has still purchased from us £10,000,000 worth of goods as against £2,500,000 worth which she purchased two years earlier. That is very satisfactory progress indeed. I should hail it as much more satisfactory if it had occurred apart from the influence of war. But the real point of these figures is that, prior to the war, America was purchasing from Australia goods to the value of only 6d. per head of her population. I think we must recognise that

we are capable of supplying her with more goods than that. All that is required is to bring our growing production into close touch with American consumption, to secure a better representation of Australia, to make some attempt to organize our industries, and to present them for the consideration of the American public.

Senator THOMAS.—I take it that we should have to get some goods back from her.

Senator MILLEN.—I will give the honorable senator the figures relating to our imports. But nobody assumed when I was quoting our exports that Australia made a present of them to America. I find that we purchased from America in 1913 goods to the value of £9,500,000 as against goods to the value of £2,500,000 purchased from us. We were, therefore, a debtor nation to America to the extent of £7,000,000. We purchased from her goods to the value of 1s. 11d. per head of our population; she purchased from us goods to the value of 6d. per head of her population. Last year, we purchased goods to the value of £15,360,000, while America purchased from us goods to the value of £17,500,000.

Senator O'KEEFE.—For ordinary trade purposes, I suppose that the Vice-President of the Executive Council would hardly include the amount represented by the export of gold?

Senator MILLEN.—I take the view that, as a gold-producing country, gold exported from Australia occupies the same position as does any other mineral. We produce it here, and the price received for it pays for its production just as is the case with iron or any other metal.

Senator THOMAS.—We get something for it.

Senator MILLEN.—My honorable friend is not suggesting that it is a surplus product so far as he is concerned.

But apart from the trade aspect of this question, I suggest that there is a practical sentiment behind it. To-day we see how impossible it is for any nation to face the world alone. To-day, this war has spread till all European nations, with two or three exceptions, are involved in it. It has spread right across to the American continent, and has even involved certain Asiatic Powers in its mesh. The lesson to be learned from this is that it is desirable that every nation should

have as many friends as possible. Now it must be obvious that, next to an absolutely perfect understanding with the people of Great Britain, and of the other Dominions, we should like to be on a good footing with the American nation. For that reason, I welcome the suggestion which is contained in the motion. Upon this point, I wish to quote a recent expression of opinion by Lord Northcliffe when on a visit to America in connexion with a mission on behalf of the Imperial authorities. In an interview with a representative of one of the American newspapers, he expressed himself in these words—

The war is knitting together the Allies in a remarkable, and, I hope, a permanent way. I see that the suggestion has been made that an Australian Commissioner should be appointed at Washington. This may be one of the many steps leading to the permanent linking of Australia and other British Dominions with this mighty Republic.

This motion can be justified and commended on the score of trade, and still more can it be justified and commended on the principle enunciated by Lord Northcliffe. I am glad to see that his is not the only indorsement given to this proposal in America, because the *New York Times* recently devoted a leading article to this subject. I presume that the discussion in America arose largely from the fact that my honorable friend Senator Bakhap tabled this motion. Apparently his action was cabled to America, and arrested attention in a way which, I venture to say, would not have been the case a few years ago. The cable news a few days ago stated—

In a leading article, the *New York Times* says that the suggested Australian Commissioner to America would be received most favorably in New York. Exporting circles are in favour of the Commissioner being stationed at New York instead of at Washington, in order to facilitate the handling problem. To exporters of Australian, Tasmanian, and New Zealand products, and to importers, the readjustment of the monetary exchange is one of the most important of the problems that are handicapping trade. The present Australian system of exchange during the past year added 3 per cent. to 5 per cent. on to the cost of American goods over that of British imports.

I quote that as showing that the *New York Times*, which may be regarded as one of the principal American papers, considered this matter of sufficient importance to justify reference to it in its leading columns.

All these things are very encouraging, and I feel, therefore, that the Senate will do well to follow the lead given by Senator Bakhap by endorsing the motion, and making it known that at any rate one branch of the Australian Legislature—and I believe the same decision will be recorded by the other House—considers the time has arrived when Australia should be represented in America in some such manner as is set forth in the motion.

Senator FERRICKS (Queensland) [8.18].—The motion appeals to me from the stand-point of an Australian, and also from the stand-point of a representative of Queensland, because, if one State more than another has facilities for trade expansion with America, that State is Queensland. I presume honorable members are well aware of the possibilities of Queensland regarding the production of raw materials. Queensland's pastoral resources are almost immeasurable, and I presume that wool figures more largely than any other product in the statement given by the Vice-President of the Executive Council. I was pleased to notice from the returns quoted by the Minister that within the past few years the balance of trade between Australia and America has turned in our favour, and that we are now on the right track, although unfortunately this is due to the existence of war, and not because of any legislative activity in the direction of protection to our industries. The war, with all its ills, its miseries, and its huge cost in men and money, has done for us what this National Parliament has not been able to do, or has not done; it has compelled us to rely upon ourselves for many of those requirements which we have discovered can be produced in Australia, but which, in past years, were neglected because we had not taken sufficient measures to ensure their production. I think it very likely that the appointment of a commercial representative from Australia to the United States of America will be of immeasurable advantage to this country, and particularly to Queensland, in view of the intention of that Government to foster trade with Vancouver and America generally. In the appointment of this official, I should not like to see the Government follow on the lines of the High Commissionership in London. The gentleman to be selected need not be dressed up in all the official

garb—I might even say the flummery—attached to the official side of the High Commissionership in London. If effect is given to the motion, I would suggest that an energetic man, experienced in commercial affairs, should be entrusted with the commission, and I feel satisfied that he would do better work than any high dignitary selected from Australian public life. It is quite true that Australia has been advertised by this war as she never was advertised before, but I maintain that Australia's action in turning down conscription also did very much to advertise the Commonwealth, because the older countries of the world, having experienced all the horrors of war, will be inclined to turn their attention to a country whose people declared against military domination. By that means they will be attracted here after the war, and this influx must have a beneficial reflex on productivity. As I have already said, the Queensland Government are actively interested in the production of raw materials, especially of iron and steel, copper, molybdenite, scheelite, and other minerals, in which Queensland's resources have only as yet been virtually scratched. In view of all these facts, the proper appeals to me as an Australian, and I sincerely trust that it will be carried.

Senator O'KEEFE (Tasmania) [8.25].—Some objection has been taken in certain quarters to the motion on the ground that it may interfere to some extent with trade between Australia and Great Britain; but that objection has not appealed to me.

Senator DE LARGIE.—Who made that objection?

Senator O'KEEFE.—If the honorable senator had been reading his papers carefully he would probably have seen very serious objections raised in certain quarters, but to me they seemed to be rather puerile. Hitherto the balance of American trade against Australia has been too great, and, in my opinion, the adoption of the motion will lead to greater trade development and the establishment of a favorable trade balance, which will more than compensate us for the expenditure incurred.

Senator THOMAS.—Talking about the balance of trade, I suppose some of the exports mentioned by the Vice-President of the Executive Council formerly went

to England and then to America, but now they are going direct.

Senator O'KEEFE.—If that is so then it is all the better for us. It is possible as I have said, that the appointment of a representative to America will lead to the development of the Australian export trade, and in this case I might mention the fruit industry, in which many States are interested. Hitherto, in what is regarded as our off season, considerable quantities of American fruit have been landed in Australia, but we have not sent any considerable quantities of our fruit to America in what may be called their off season. It seems likely that an Australian Trade Commissioner would be able to do something to extend our trade. I indorse the remarks made by Senator Ferricks that it will not be necessary to have a costly retinue attached to the office of the Australian representative in America, as in the case with the High Commissioner in London. I have pleasure in supporting the motion, and I trust that it will receive the indorsement of the other House.

Senator REID (Queensland) [8.30].—I am interested in this motion from a racial point of view, because I believe that the English-speaking races throughout the world have a great work before them. There are national upheavals everywhere at the present time, and in whatever direction we look there is evidence that the Democratic spirit that is abroad is overturning old forms of government and bringing nations into touch that previously had little communication one with another. The people of the British Empire and of the United States of America have very much in common. Their aspirations and ideals are much the same, and they are one in language and in many of their customs and habits. I believe that any step tending to bring the English-speaking Democracies together must ultimately be for the benefit of the world. The English language is fast becoming the commercial language of the world. Its use in commercial circles is making headway everywhere. In my view anything that will bring the English-speaking races more closely together must tend to a condition of affairs which will make impossible such struggles as that in which we are engaged at the present time. The first step to take is to foster trade rela-

tions between the English-speaking peoples, and the example set by English-speaking Democracies must be an inspiration to other nations at present striving after self-government. No people are better qualified to assist the other races of the world to achieve self-government than are the English-speaking people of the British Empire and of the United States of America.

Senator NEEDHAM.—For instance we might give self-government to Ireland.

Senator REID.—That will come by-and-by. The greatest enemies to the self-government of Ireland have been the people of Ireland.

Senator NEEDHAM.—The honorable senator thinks so?

Senator REID.—Speaking broadly, I do think so. Every time that self-government for Ireland is about to be achieved something arising in that country has prevented its accomplishment. That is what I mean when I say that the people of Ireland have themselves been the greatest obstacles to the attainment of self-government in that country. No doubt they will get it by-and-by.

The PRESIDENT.—I ask the honorable senator not to discuss that question. He has allowed himself to be led away by an interjection.

Senator NEEDHAM.—The honorable senator started the subject himself. He invited the interjection.

Senator REID.—I do not object to the interjection at all. I was saying that the English-speaking peoples of the world can supply the best examples of national self-government for adoption by the people of other nations.

There is another matter to which I should like to refer in discussing this motion. Only this afternoon we have been considering a Railways Bill providing for the appointment of a Commissioner to control the Commonwealth railways, and I should like to say that I trust that at a very early date the Northern Territory will be connected with the Queensland railway system running out towards Camooweal.

The PRESIDENT.—I cannot allow the honorable senator to go into that matter.

Senator REID.—It was my intention to point out that by the establishment of a Trade Commissioner to represent Australia in the United States of America

it would be possible to make better known to the people of that country that Queensland is in a position to supply a practically unlimited quantity of an article for which there is a very great demand in the United States of America. I may inform the Senate that some Americans have already recognised the possibilities of the cattle raising industry in Queensland, and have established on the Brisbane River one of the most up-to-date meat works to be found anywhere outside the United States of America. The establishment of those works has been the means of finding employment for a very large number of people to whom the best wages are being paid, and the way in which the works are conducted is an example to other meat works in that State. I am aware that some outcry was raised against the danger of allowing American syndicates and trusts to come in and capture the cattle business of Queensland. Any one who knows the Gulf country of Queensland and the part of the Northern Territory in the neighbourhood of the Gulf of Carpentaria will agree that millions of cattle can be bred there to supply not only the Australian market, but the American market. Since the establishment of the meat works on the Brisbane River to which I have referred, another big American company has been negotiating for land with the idea of putting up similar works, but the industrial troubles that have arisen, and the consequent uncertainty of continued operations, has caused this company to hold its hand at the present time.

Senator NEEDHAM.—Would the honorable senator like American companies to take charge of the Queensland meat business?

Senator REID.—They have charge of the meatworks on the Brisbane River to which I have referred. I think that every inducement should be held out to American companies to invest their capital in the Commonwealth. A great deal may be said, and a great deal has already been said, about the danger of encouraging American syndicates to come to Australia, but I remind those who speak in that way that in this young Democracy we are making experiments as to what is the best course to take in connexion with the relations between labour and capital, and I have confidence that the people of Australia are sufficiently intelligent, and

their democratic spirit is sufficiently strong, to safeguard the interests of employees in this country whether they are engaged in enterprises controlled by American companies or not. We have established Wages Boards and Arbitration Courts for the protection of the workers, and I fail to see that any danger is likely to arise from inducing American companies to establish meatworks and other enterprises in the Commonwealth. The Northern Territory is now under the control of the Commonwealth Government, and we know that the best use has not been made of it up to the present time. By connecting that part of it in the neighbourhood of the Gulf of Carpentaria with the Queensland railway system great inducements might be held out for future settlement. No one who has not visited the Gulf country of Queensland or the Northern Territory can have any conception of the immense areas of land that are comprised in cattle stations in those districts. One may be a whole week travelling through one of those stations. If the Northern Territory were properly cut up we might have a hundred stations cut out of the area at present comprised in one or two. Honorable senators are aware that great areas of the Northern Territory are leased to a couple of individuals or firms.

The PRESIDENT.—The honorable senator is dealing with a very interesting subject, but I think it is not relevant to the motion.

Senator REID.—My idea was to suggest that if the Territory under the control of the Commonwealth were developed as it might be, and a Trade Commissioner representing Australia was established in the United States of America, it might lead to Americans taking a greater interest in our development, and, speaking from a Queensland point of view, that appeared to me to be one of the strongest inducements to support the motion.

Another reason why I favour the passing of this motion is that there are a number of ports in Queensland from which minerals, cattle, and wool could be sent to the United States of America. These ports offer excellent shipping facilities for the export of our products. As wool-buyers the Americans at present are the greatest competitors of British manufacturers, because they go in for the best classes of wool produced. Many of our

cheaper wools are sent to the Continent and Japan, but Americans are purchasers of our best wools. Australia is to-day the largest cattle producer and wool-grower in the world. We should look to America in the future for a market for our cattle and our wool, so that prices may be kept up in such a way as to enable us to secure the revenue which will be necessary to meet the financial responsibilities we have undertaken.

Senator THOMAS.—Does the honorable senator not think that it would better help our wool trade with America that the Americans should remove their duty upon wool?

Senator MILLEN. — Might not one be supplementary to the other?

Senator REID.—If we had a Trade Commissioner established in America the relations between our people and America would be greatly fostered, and trade between the two countries would greatly increase. We can find plenty of markets for our inferior wools, but we can find in the United States of America a good market for our best wools. That is another reason why I am disposed to support the motion submitted by Senator Bakhap, and consider that it should be favorably received by the Senate.

I repeat the expression of my hope that it may lead to the binding together of the English-speaking races, and so be the means of rendering important assistance to the other nations of the world when the great war in which we are now engaged is over. I believe that the English-speaking races will be found to be one of the most important factors in assisting other nations to attain self-government, and this must in its turn do away with much of the friction that has existed between different nations in the past.

Senator GUY (Tasmania) [8.44].—I was at first inclined to think this motion unnecessary. Generally speaking, the appointment of a High Commissioner is regarded as a superfluity since it is assumed that his business is merely to attend Court functions and levees. But in so far as it would affect trade relations between the United States of America and Australia, I think that there can be no question about supporting the proposal other than this, that if it is going to be a big Department, costing a very considerable amount of money, with our present lack of transport for some years ahead, it is very questionable if we will get much

during the next few years out of the appointment of a Commissioner. I hope that the intention of my colleague is that this official will be rather a Trade Commissioner than a High Commissioner. I believe that if it should go forth to the public that we are setting up a High Commissioner, with a number of officials, in America, it will be thought that we are adding unnecessarily to the cost of the government of Australia. The prospect, for some years to come, I repeat, is that we shall have a very difficult task to transport our products to America or anywhere else. Therefore, I should have been better pleased if this motion had been left in abeyance for twelve months or so, when we could have seen more clearly what we would be likely to accomplish from its adoption. In so far as it will tend towards binding the English-speaking races together in a fraternal spirit, the motion ought to commend itself to the Senate. And, even in so far as it will tend to increase our trade relations with the people of the United States of America, speaking our own language, it ought to commend itself to the Senate. But I am afraid that the public generally will look upon this proposal, if it should go forth as a step to setting up a High Commissioner, as more or less a superfluity. Possibly in his reply Senator Bakhap will tell us that his object is more particularly to increase our trade relations with our cousins in the United States of America. If that is the end in view, we can give the motion our hearty support; but if it is to set up a High Commissioner, with a costly retinue, I think that it will not meet with the approval which it ought to receive in the Commonwealth.

Senator BAKHAP (Tasmania) [8.48].—Needless to say, I am very gratified at the reception given to this motion by honorable senators. I had very little doubt that when the Vice-President of the Executive Council addressed himself to a consideration of the question we would have quite a notable contribution to the debate from him, and I have not been disappointed. His short speech was something admirable. I am not in the habit of giving fulsome praise to any person, but I must say that I was particularly pleased in listening to the fine speech which fell from the lips

of the Minister. Other honorable senators who addressed themselves to the motion also kept the debate at a very high level. I think that the Senate is performing, to a very large extent, the functions which the Australian people imagined it would perform when they embarked upon Federation, when it takes upon itself the handling of important questions such as the one embodied in my motion. I did not rise for the purpose of making a lengthy speech; for, really, all the arguments which have been advanced for the consideration of honorable senators have been in favour of the motion. But it is necessary for me to apologize for an oversight on my part, and to ask the indulgence of the Senate, inasmuch as it is necessary to slightly amend the motion.

The arguments brought forward in favour of the motion have been such as not to necessitate any traversing of them by myself; but I desire to particularly reply to some criticism of the motion which has been published outside the Senate, and, I think, published under a misapprehension. I always welcome criticism. I believe that fair criticism is quite in the interests of the principle of any proposal which is before Parliament for discussion. But it was asserted that this motion had in it something craven, and almost dastardly, in that it embodied a sort of opportunity for the alienation of the affections of Australia from the great Mother Country, and a transference of them to the United States of America. As honorable senators will remember, I had a similar motion on the notice-paper in the last Parliament for at least two years. I am sure that they understand that I have not any idea whatever of belittling the connexion with the Mother Country, a connexion which I am wholly in favour of maintaining and strengthening in every possible way. It is for the purpose of strengthening the Empire and the position of the English-speaking races of the world that I have brought forward the motion. I happened to say in the course of my short address to the Senate, that I believed that very shortly, if she was not at present, America would be the financial centre of the world. Well, sir, facts are facts, and singular to say in the very issue of the journal which criticised Senator Lynch and myself for hav-

ing brought the proposal before the Senate, there appeared a notification that America was making preparations to lend the Allies a further sum of £600,000,000. A nation which is capable of doing that, a nation in which our mother tongue is spoken, is certainly one with which we ought to endeavour to link ourselves up by all the fraternal ties it is possible for us to conceive and bring into practical operation.

We are entering, I may say, a new domain of political philosophy. Australia is no longer a youth even in a national sense. Australia is a grown-up nation with a grown-up nation's responsibilities, and I have been very careful in the terms of the motion to set out that action should only be taken if the consent of the Imperial authorities can be obtained. Surely that is sufficiently indicative of the fact that the motion has not been conceived in any sense of hostility, even of slackness, towards the Mother Country, but in a full spirit of honest and loyal allegiance to her, and to the interests of that Empire of which she is even yet the chief unit, although her statesmen know full well that in the progress of time some of the children Dominions may, perhaps, grow to a national stature which may eclipse even that of the grand old Mother Country. The terms of this motion are not such that by giving his adhesion to them any Australian besmirches in the least his loyalty to our grand Empire. But it is merely taking one of those statesmanlike precautions that will enable another strong cable to be put out, which will anchor us more firmly in regard to our Imperial position.

Honorable senators have very properly and practically, for our race is a practical one, addressed themselves to a consideration of trade issues, and possibilities. I go with them to the full extent of the way traversed by their remarks. But I will say that it was not trade which was uppermost in my mind during the long months, indeed long years, in which I have been giving attention to this question. I conceive that it is necessary for us—an important unit of the Empire with interests in common with those of all the other oversea Dominions, but yet with interests peculiarly our own—to be able to make through an accredited representative, intimate representations to the authorities of the American Republic on many matters affecting our national welfare, and,

indeed, the welfare of our Empire. Now, Japan, one of our Allies, is a country which has grown in the space of about half a century from the status of a hermit oriental kingdom to one of the great Powers of the world. Since this motion has been discussed by the Senate, we have been able to read in the columns of our press that the Japanese Government are sending a special mission to Washington. It has its regular Ambassador at Washington, but it is stepping aside from the ordinary diplomatic channels and is sending a special mission to that capital to deal with a special question, namely, the status of those islands taken from Germany by the might of the Japanese arms, naval and military. If a matter of that description is such as to justify our great Ally in going outside her ordinary diplomatic resources, and sending a special mission to America, surely we may be pardoned for thinking that there is something that has grown out of this war which has a very great bearing on our future, and in connexion with which our American cousins ought to know what I might call the innermost thoughts of the administrators of Australia's affairs. For this reason alone we would be justified in sending to Washington the highest accredited official representative which the contingencies of Imperial diplomacy would permit.

Senator THOMAS.—That is a different idea from that of the Minister leading the Senate. What are we asked to vote for? The appointment of an Ambassador or the appointment of a Trade Commissioner?

Senator BAKHAP.—I am going to ask leave to amend the motion at the very proper and wise suggestion of the Vice-President of the Executive Council. It is a mere trivial amendment.

So important is diplomatic or quasi-diplomatic representation esteemed by people with a proper sense of national responsibility, that I might mention that while I was in the East I had the pleasure of dining with a gentleman who received a very good salary in the British Colony of Hong Kong as the diplomatic representative of the Republic of Panama. That Republic was created only yesterday, so to speak, at the instance of the American authorities. This very small Latin American Republic, recently constituted, and important only in the

eyes of the world because through its territory the Panama Canal was constructed, had a well-paid diplomatic representative at even the territorially small British Colony of Hong Kong, a small island off the coast of China, where, I suppose, there were not above fifty Spanish-speaking people.

Senator THOMAS.—Have they a representative like that in every part of the world?

Senator BAKHAP.—That I cannot say, but I know that they had a diplomatic representative in Hong Kong. In Australia we have 5,000,000 of English-speaking people. We occupy a continent, and some very grave problems affect our future.

I hope, sir, that I am not trespassing beyond the terms of the motion when I say—that the peace which will come upon the world, let us hope soon, will be, not a German peace, but an American peace. It is the American people who are going to have the decisive voice in the peace which will, I trust, soon come upon the tortured nations of the world.

Senator FERRICKS.—Their peace is a peace with no annexations, no indemnities, and freedom of the high seas.

Senator BAKHAP.—The honorable senator is going too far. It is not such a peace as he imagines at all. For that reason alone, Australia, and those who represent her at this critical juncture in the Imperial fortunes, should be placed in the most intimate touch with the authorities at Washington. While I indorse to the full everything which has fallen from the lips of honorable senators who have addressed themselves to the motion, there are those grave reasons which the Vice-President of the Executive Council shortly, but forcibly, alluded to, which would, alone, justify the Senate in adopting, as I feel sure it will adopt, the motion. I ask permission of the Senate to amend the motion by eliminating the words "a High Commissioner," and inserting in lieu thereof the words "of an Official Representative of," and I also desire to insert a second paragraph to read:—

2. That this resolution be transmitted to the House of Representatives for its concurrence therein.

Motion, by leave, amended accordingly.

Senator BAKHAP.—I am particularly pleased with the consideration extended

to the motion. I am greatly gratified with the debate upon it, and I will now leave the proposal, as amended, to the decision of the Senate.

Motion, as amended, agreed to.

Resolved—

1. That in the opinion of the Senate, if the consent of the Imperial Government can be obtained to the action being taken, it is desirable that an official representative of Australia should be accredited to the United States Government at Washington.

2. That this resolution be transmitted to the House of Representatives requesting its concurrence therein—put and passed.

CAPTURED GERMAN POSSESSIONS.

Debate resumed from 12th July (*vide* page 299), on motion by Senator BAKHAP—

1. That the Senate expresses its unqualified appreciation and approval of the statement made on the 31st January last by the Honorable the Colonial Secretary (Mr. Walter Long), which emphatically sets forth that none of the captured Colonial Possessions of the German Empire will, in any circumstances, be returned to that Power; and, furthermore, resolves that any proposal to restore the captured German territories in the vicinity of the Australian Continent will be particularly distasteful to the people of the Commonwealth, and prejudicial to their interests, as well as to the future peace of the world.

2. That the foregoing resolution be transmitted to the House of Representatives for its concurrence.

Senator MILLEN (New South Wales—Vice-President of the Executive Council) [9.3].—I rather suspect that this night will go down to history as Bakhap's night. At any rate, it is the second occasion upon which the honorable senator has, by motion, directed our attention to a distinctly important and a distinctly big question. In dealing with it, I ask the indulgence of honorable senators while I mention one or two historical facts connected with the subject that is dealt with by the motion which we are now considering.

Thirty-five years ago, Germany did not possess a single acre outside of Europe. In the thirty years prior to the outbreak of war, she had put together a Colonial Empire which, if we exclude Russia, was as large as the balance of Europe. That big Empire which had been put together as the result of thirty years of German diplomacy, was wrested from Germany, temporarily, at least, by thirty months of war. I am not suggest-

ing that that is a factor at all decisive in relation to the war, though it is one of considerable historic importance to us to-day. Upon these Colonies which Germany had acquired—and I am referring to them because it is impossible to consider the captured German Colonies adjacent to Australia without also considering the German captured Colonies in other parts of the world—Germany has spent in hard cash £120,000,000. In the last complete financial year before the outbreak of the war, there appeared on the Imperial German Budget the sum of £5,345,000, representing subsidies to different parts of her Colonial Empire. It is quite evident, therefore, that, however we may view them, they were regarded as of some importance by Germany.

There is another historical fact that I desire to mention; and I do so because, to some extent, it is a justification for this motion. In the course of the debate which was initiated when this proposal was submitted by Senator Bakhap, reference was made to the little incident with which the name of Sir Thomas Mcllwraith is so creditably associated in connexion with New Guinea. But it is worth while noting that our experience in regard to New Guinea has been practically the experience of every one of the Colonies which have been torn from Germany during the past two or three years. For instance, Samoa occupied exactly a similar position. In 1877 the natives of that island petitioned the British authorities to proclaim a protectorate over it. The British authorities declined the invitation, with the result that two years later Samoa became a German Protectorate, and, later, a German Possession. In Africa it is interesting to note that the king of the Cameroons was first educated by the Germans and then hanged by them, thus placing him in a position, had he lived long enough, to testify to the efficiency of German culture. In the early eighties his father sought British protection, but was met with a refusal, with the result that when, in 1884, the British Consul hurried along for the purpose of complying with the request which had been made two or three years earlier, he arrived five days too late, and found Germany in possession of the place. Then in German South-West Africa the natives, in 1883, appealed for the establishment of a British protectorate

over them. That appeal was not responded to, and Germany stepped into the breach the following year. It will be seen, therefore, that all these places enjoy a common history in this regard. In no single instance did their native population appeal to be taken under German protection. Their appeals were always to Britain. Realizing their danger, they do not appear to have welcomed the prospect of German rule. They appealed to England, not, perhaps, because they desired to come under the control of any Power, but because they desired to be protected from Germany, which was becoming an increasing menace to them.

This motion brings us face to face with one at least of those big responsibilities to which Australia will have to address itself as the result of the part we have played in this war. When we stepped from our peaceful solitude into the dangerous and certainly discordant arena of international politics, as we did on the 4th August, 1914, we must recognise that, though our action added a few cubits to our political stature, it also imposed upon us very distinct and grave responsibilities, one of which is brought home to us by this motion. In the past, when we have had occasion to press our views on the notice of the Imperial authorities, we have only been under an obligation to consider ourselves and the Empire. But to-day we must recognise that, to a very great extent, we have to take into our consideration other interests as well. We have no longer to consider what will suit Australia alone, or what, indeed, will suit the Empire alone. We have to consider the interests, and, it may be, the susceptibilities, of our Allies. Now this motion does bring up a question of importance when it brings under review the question of annexations. Little as we know of what is taking place in Europe, we must recognise from the scanty news supplied by the cables that the councils of the statesmen of the Allied countries are being influenced by this very question. It is a question which has become very prominent during the past few months. Our latest Ally has made it tolerably clear that she is little disposed to continue a war merely to enable one country to acquire territory at the expense of another. This question has also been a gravely disturbing factor in Russia. As to what is

Senator Millen.

happening there, we can see but dimly. But it is manifest that this question of annexation has seriously divided the factions in that country. I do not suggest that because of this we are under a disability in enunciating what we conceive to be our interests. But we are under an obligation to put them forward in a way which will add as little as possible to the difficulties of Imperial statesmen.

Senator NEEDHAM.—They must not be put forward dictatorially.

Senator MILLEN.—I am sure we will not do that, and I am very glad of the suggestion that we should refrain from doing anything of the kind. I was endeavouring to make it quite clear that whilst in no sense are we justified in refraining from any action for which our interests may call, we are under a distinct obligation to approach this question in a way which will show that we are not confining our gaze to mere local surroundings, but that we are asking for fair consideration of what we believe to be our interests, and at the same time exhibiting a willingness to recognise the interests of those with whom we are associated.

There is one thing which will comfort us all when we consider this motion, namely, the past relationship between this and the other Dominions and Great Britain. Whenever we have had occasion to press our views on the attention of Imperial statesmen, the most casual student of history will admit that those representations have been received in the most generous spirit. Whenever there has been an apparent, or possibly a real, conflict between Australian and Imperial interests, truth compels us to recognise that the Imperial authorities have shown a persistent and magnanimous desire to meet us in every way that is compatible with those larger interests. We can argue from that that they will not be unmindful of representations which we may elect to make now.

To show that the position of Australia and our relationship with the rest of the Empire are clearly understood by the responsible statesmen of Great Britain, I should like to quote from a speech made by the Prime Minister—Mr. Lloyd George—in February of the present year—

The question of the conquered German territories will be considered among others. It is unthinkable that their disposition after the

war should be determined without consulting the Dominions—

Here is the portion to which I wish to direct attention—

It is also unthinkable that the question should be settled without the Dominions taking their share of the responsibility of considering this issue, not as a separate one, but as part of the settlement—the whole settlement—of the great world problems which must inevitably follow the end of this great world war. Their presence at this Conference, or rather, Cabinet, is essential in order that they should share with us the anxious burden of considering, not merely a part, however important, but all the factors in a cause for which their sons so freely sacrificed their lives.

Those words indicate very clearly the recognition by the most responsible statesman of the Empire to-day, not only of our right to be heard in the matter, but—here I again remind honorable senators of the words to which I drew special attention—also of our responsibility, not merely to ourselves, but to the rest of the Empire. We must, therefore, consider this matter not merely as a question affecting Australia, but as affecting the Empire as a whole.

I want now to make clear what is indicated by this motion, and what is the motive underlying our support or acceptance of it. In my judgment, and I believe in the judgment of other honorable senators who may support the motion, it is not that we want added territory so much as added protection; not more acres, but greater security; not that we are seeking additional potential wealth, but increased freedom from an otherwise assured menace. We can, I think, declare our views and our desires in regard to this matter with a perfectly clear conscience, absolutely free from any possible suspicion that we are seeking territorial aggrandisement. If at this stage we neglect to make known our views, we do so at our peril. If we need any justification for the motion, surely it is supplied to us by the history of the past. Whilst we were dreaming our pleasant dreams in our fool's paradise, as it turned out to be, Germany, in territory adjacent to these shores, was starting there with her military preparations which over a period of forty years were made so thoroughly in her homeland. We know, also, that even in Australia she had already succeeded in introducing the tentacles of her wide-spread and sinister organization. With this history to guide us, we

should indeed be foolish if we did not, as far as possible, ask for guarantees for the future. There are some people who declare that Germany will emerge from this war a reclaimed and a reformed nation. We may indulge that hope certainly, but I do say we would be fools indeed if we did not ask for some evidence of that reform before we viewed with equanimity the possibility of Germany being again established as our near neighbour. It has been said that a leopard cannot change his spots, nor the Ethiopian his skin. I am not going to pronounce upon that problem, but where, as in this case, a nation is concerned, I think we have every right to ask that there shall be some evidence of reform before we could welcome Germany so near to our shores, and allow her to establish herself in islands adjacent to this continent.

I have been speaking with regard to the action of Germany in the past. I should like now to direct attention to a warning given to us only a few weeks ago in a statement made by the German Colonial Secretary—Salf—who, according to the cable messages, declared—

The German colonial programme was very simple and clear. They wanted their Colonies back after the war, when they would create a well-developed colonial property, capable of resistance.

Those words are inoffensive enough in themselves. But Germany would have us believe that this is, for her, a war of defence. Was it a measure of resistance when Germany invaded inoffensive Belgium? I, for one, am disposed to ask for something very much stronger and more binding than Germany's declaration before I can accept the statement just quoted at its face value.

What I have said will, I think, sufficiently indicate the view which the Government take with regard to this motion. I only desire to add that the Government is fully seized with the vital importance of this question as it affects the ultimate future of this country. No steps will be wanting on its part to see that Australia's interests are properly and energetically pressed upon the attention of Imperial statesmen. At the same time, the Government realizes that in dealing with this matter, we have not merely to consider our local interests, but the interests of the Empire and our Allies as a whole.

I desire now to turn to the motion itself, and to examine it in detail, because I want my honorable friend to accept a slight alteration in the verbiage, and in order to make my intention clear, I shall read the motion, which is as follows:—

That the Senate expresses its unqualified appreciation and approval of the statements made on the 31st January last by the Honorable the Colonial Secretary (Mr. Walter Long), which emphatically sets forth that none of the captured Colonial Possessions of the German Empire will, in any circumstances, be returned to that Power;

I desire to draw particular attention to these words, because it is clear that Senator Bakhap based his motion on a statement which, according to the cable news, was made by Mr. Walter Long. It must be noticed, however, that Mr. Long subsequently reviewed and very considerably modified his statement. Now, this is what Mr. Long is reported to have said on the occasion referred to—

Now, I speak with knowledge and with responsibility, and I speak as the representative, for the moment, of those overseas Dominions which are the pride and glory of our Empire to-day, when I say, "Let no man think that these struggles have been fought in vain; let no man think that these territories shall ever return to German rule."

As I have said, Senator Bakhap apparently framed his motion on this cabled report of Mr. Long's speech. Subsequently the Prime Minister of Great Britain—why I cannot say, although I can hazard a guess—made public a statement having a direct bearing upon the remarks made by the Colonial Secretary. It seems to me that he did so because the question of annexations, then, as now, was occasioning some thought in the councils of the Allies. At any rate, the Prime Minister did make a statement which, in some respects, was thought to materially modify the remarks made by the Colonial Secretary. At a later stage the question again came up, and as the result of some criticism in the House of Commons, Mr. Long, replying, I think, to Mr. Buxton, said—

The honorable member was incorrect in quoting me as saying that on no consideration should Germany ever have any Colonies. Of course, I never used any language of that kind, and any one who will read my speech will see quite plainly what it was I stated. I said that I was speaking as Secretary for the Colonies, and I was expressing the opinion of those I am specially bound to represent, namely, our Dominions and our Colonies in different parts of the world, as well as the opinion of many people here, and the language

I used was used solely as representing the Dominions, and I think there are many people here who share that view.

I am not very much concerned about reconciling Mr. Long's later statement with his earlier utterance as cabled. I merely point to it because it seems to me that Mr. Long's original statement can hardly be accepted as a sufficient reason upon which to found the motion now before the Senate, and therefore I am going to suggest to Senator Bakhap that he strike out that portion of his motion, which can stand by itself, quite irrespective of anything Mr. Long may have said.

There is another matter to which I direct Senator Bakhap's attention. I have already pointed out that it seems highly desirable that we should make it clear that we are not desirous of territorial aggrandisement, but that we have in view the future national safety of this country. With that object in mind, I shall read the latter portion of the motion, which is as follows:—

and, furthermore, resolves that any proposal to restore the captured German territories in the vicinity of the Australian Continent will be particularly distasteful to the people of the Commonwealth, and prejudicial to their interests, as well as to the future peace of the world.

We understand perfectly what those words mean, but we must realize that they are capable of other interpretation in other parts of the world. The phrase, that the restoration of the German territory "will be particularly distasteful to the people of the Commonwealth," does not make it clear why such restoration to Germany will be distasteful to Australia, and people on the other side of the world might conclude that this restoration would be distasteful because Australia would thus lose an addition to her Possessions. Now, that is not the reason which animates us at all, and I want this to be made perfectly clear. I would like, therefore, to secure Senator Bakhap's concurrence to my suggestion that he himself should alter the motion. The other words of the honorable senator's motion which I think are capable of improvement are those which speak of the restoration of the former German Colonies as being "prejudicial to our interests." The restoration would be prejudicial to our interests, but, again, the motion does not make clear what are the interests referred to. It might be inferred that they were trade interests,

and I desire that our resolution should stand as far apart as may be from any suggestion that we are moved by any mere material gain that might accrue to us by the acquisition of these Colonies. I am certain that that is not what is in the mind of any member of the Senate. I suggest, therefore, that the motion would express all that we desire in a way to which no exception could be taken, and which would be less capable of being misinterpreted or misunderstood elsewhere if it took something like this form—

That the restoration of the captured German Colonies in the vicinity of the Australian Continent will constitute a standing menace to the safety of this country, as well as to the future peace of the world.

I shall not move that as an amendment upon the motion, but make the suggestion for the acceptance of Senator Bakhap. That would make it quite clear that the sole motive animating us in this matter is a regard for our own national safety. It would free us from any imputation of having participated in the war, or of being willing to continue to take our part in it, merely for the purpose of adding to our already widespread territory.

I have only one thing more to say, and it is this: This motion can hardly be considered without recognising that, of itself, it can be of no avail. The final disposition of these territories is not going to be achieved by a resolution of this or any other Parliament. The final disposition of the captured German territories will be decided according to the military position when peace is at length proclaimed. I want to impress upon honorable senators who are prepared to support the motion that it is idle to do so unless, at the same time, we are resolved that, so far as we can, we will do what lies in our power to so order the strength of this country that we may help Australia, the Empire, and our Allies to place themselves in such a position as to be able to give effect to the motion after we have passed it here. I like to think that, by supporting this motion, the Senate will be again registering its determination to do all that is possible to see the war through to a successful issue, which will not only relieve us of the possibility of the existence of a German menace close to our shores, but will relieve the whole world from that German menace which

has been hanging over it for half a century.

Motion (by Senator NEEDHAM) negatived—

That the debate be now adjourned.

Senator DE LARGIE (Western Australia) [9.34].—It is yet rather early to adjourn the debate on this motion. I think that Senator Bakhap cannot expect that it will meet with the friendly reception that was accorded to the other motion he submitted. It deals with a very contentious question, and one upon which we are in no better position than are any of the Powers engaged in the present war, to be dogmatic about. I regard it as a matter for regret that this question should have been brought before the Senate. Unfortunately, it has been introduced and debated, and we must now put the best face we can upon it. We are in somewhat the same predicament as the nigger who caught hold of the lion's tail in order to escape from it. To let go was about the worst thing he could do, and it was still very uncomfortable for him to hang on. Even though Senator Bakhap should accept the amendment of his motion suggested by Senator Millen, we shall be assuming a very considerable responsibility in agreeing to it. The settlement of the question does not rest with us, nor does it rest with half-a-dozen other Governments and Parliaments. We know the position in which the Government of Queensland placed themselves in the early eighties, when they annexed the whole of the island of New Guinea that was not already a British Possession. We know how the Queensland Government came out of that matter. I hold that they came out of it in a very undignified way. The Imperial authorities told the Queensland Government to haul down the flag which they had so hurriedly hoisted in New Guinea. That incident, which was quoted by Senator Bakhap, should have been a lesson to the honorable senator as to the danger of submitting a motion of this kind.

Senator REID.—The fault was with the Mother Country for failing to back up Queensland in that matter.

Senator DE LARGIE.—I do not know whether the Mother Country did not do the right and proper thing at that time. My point is that that incident should be

a lesson to us to hasten slowly in the consideration of questions of this kind. I am afraid that we have yet a very long way to go before we reach the end of the war; and, even when the war is brought to a close, other countries and other Governments besides that of Australia will naturally and properly desire to have some say with regard to the future of captured German Possessions in the Pacific. It will, I think, be agreed that New Zealand is entitled to some say in the matter, and also that Canada and the United States of America may claim to be considered. So many countries and Governments are interested in the question, that Senator Bakhap would have been wiser if he had refrained from asking us to rush in and deal with a matter which cannot be satisfactorily dealt with until the war is brought to a close. This is a very dangerous question for us to handle, and one with which we cannot deal in a satisfactory way. I repeat my regret that it should have been introduced at all.

At the beginning of the war I think that nine out of every ten persons interested in the future disposition of different territories as a possible outcome of the war, would have said that the one prize which Russia looked forward to gaining was Constantinople. But we have found, since the revolution in Russia, that the people of that country have repudiated any desire to acquire additional territory in any part of the world. In view of the fact that Russia has expressed her readiness to give up Constantinople as a prize—

Senator THOMAS.—Which she has not captured.

Senator DE LARGIE.—Russia has repudiated the suggestion that she desires Constantinople.

Senator THOMAS.—She has not captured it, and there are Germans in possession of some of her own territory.

Senator DE LARGIE.—It is all very well for Senator Thomas to say that; but we should some time ago have said that if Germany was beaten in the present struggle, the desire of Russia to secure Constantinople, if she had the chance, was quite as great as the desire of Australia to secure the captured German Possessions in the Pacific.

Senator THOMAS.—One would not say so from the way in which Russia is going about the war now.

Senator DE LARGIE.—I am sure that we are not going to speak of the way in which Russia is conducting herself in connexion with the war at the present time. In view of the statement which has been made on behalf of Russia since the revolution in that country, we should be very careful indeed about what territories we propose to annex.

Senator REID.—Is it Russia that is speaking in the way the honorable senator suggests?

Senator DE LARGIE.—I think it is clearly the Democracy of Russia that has given expression to that view.

Senator REID.—The Democracy of Russia is not Russia.

Senator DE LARGIE.—Perhaps Senator Reid thinks that the deposed Czar is Russia. We know that it was the desire of the military caste in Russia to secure possession of Constantinople.

Senator GUY.—All the evidence we have supports the view expressed by the honorable senator.

Senator DE LARGIE.—I think that nine out of every ten persons will agree with the statement I have made. There will, no doubt, be tremendous disappointment created if some territories, the possession of which is contended for, are not restored to the people to whom they rightly belong, at the close of the war. I am not going to say that the islands to which Senator Bakhap's motion refers will not be given to Australia. I am afraid, however, that we would not find them a very great prize, even if we had them to-morrow. The cost of government in that direction is very great at the present time. We have gained but very little from many of the Territories we hold in that region, and I do not see that we would gain very much by getting more of them.

Senator SENIOR.—That was true of Australia in the first years, remember.

Senator DE LARGIE.—I do not know that it was ever true of Australia. I think that it was always admitted to be a splendid place to live in so far as climate is concerned, but who will say that these Possessions up towards the Equator are suitable for white men to live in?

Senator SENIOR.—Go back to the thirties.

Senator MILLEN.—The motion is not urged on the ground that the Possessions are valuable.

Senator DE LARGIE.—I do not think than any one who listened to the speech of Senator Bakhap could come to any opinion other than that he considered the Possessions to be of very great value to Australia. I do not hold that view, as I have already pointed out there are other Governments within the Empire who have an equal right to be consulted, but who have refrained from expressing an opinion. We would have been well advised if we had refrained from debating the question at the present juncture. I was pointing out that in my opinion there is a territory as to which the whole of the Allies will be disappointed if it is not taken away from the enemy, and that is the territory of Alsace-Lorraine. Who at the present stage will say for a certainty that even Alsace-Lorraine, which is part and parcel of historical France, will be recovered from the enemy. We are told that we must catch our hare before we can make soup, but we have not caught our hare yet.

Senator BAKHAP.—We have caught these Colonies, anyhow.

Senator DE LARGIE.—We may be in the soup before this business is all over. I would like to see the military position much more favorable to the Allies before I would become boastful as to what we ought to insist upon and what we shall do. I would have preferred to leave this question for discussion hereafter. Had Senator Bakhap been content to wait and see how things were likely to go it would have been better for all concerned. We could have dealt with the question at a later stage much more freely than we can do at present. Because of that feeling I would have liked this matter to be held over until a more favorable time to discuss it.

Senator NEEDHAM.—If you wanted more time to discuss the matter why did you oppose the adjournment of the debate?

Senator BAKHAP.—That was owing to a misunderstanding.

Senator DE LARGIE.—With me, it is not a question of discussing the matter

to-night or next week, but a question of delaying its discussion for months, perhaps years. I think that we have ample time in which to discuss it.

Senator BAKHAP.—I remind the honorable senator that the Japanese are already taking action in the matter.

Senator DE LARGIE.—Undoubtedly, and they have as good a right to cast their eyes in this direction as we have.

Senator BAKHAP.—I mean in regard to the German Possessions which they have occupied.

Senator DE LARGIE.—We could have better considered this matter at the close of the war than we can at the present juncture, but this motion has been submitted and discussed, and perhaps the best thing we can do now is to accept it in the amended form suggested by the Minister. That I think is the only move open to us.

Senator FERRICKS (Queensland) [9.50].—I have been deeply interested in the two speeches we have heard on this question—that by the Vice-President of the Executive Council, particularly in parts, and pretty well the whole of the remarks of Senator de Largie. It appears to me that at long last, at the end of three years the indications are that a bit of toleration is being given birth to. I venture to say that if six or twelve months ago an honorable senator on this side had uttered the sentiment which Senators de Largie and Millen in parts of their speeches gave voice to to-night, he would have been described as a pro-German, an “I.W.W.-ite,” and a traitor.

Senator MILLEN.—The honorable senator has misunderstood me if he has taken anything I have said to indicate that view.

Senator FERRICKS.—The Minister pointed out how, by indorsing the motion as it stands, it might embarrass the Imperial statesmen in arriving at terms of peace. In view of the fact that, time after time, statements have been made in the Senate that, under no circumstances, were these Colonies ever to be returned to Germany, I do say that, had we then made the remarks which have been addressed to us to-night, the epithets would have been hurled at us to which we have had to listen so often during the past twelve months. I am very pleased to see what I regard as

a return to sanity. Surely to goodness, after three years of warfare, it is time in all conscience, that a citizen, especially in the National Parliament, should have the right to voice his opinions without being howled at as a traitor, an "I.W.W.-ite," a pro-German, and all the rest of it. There is hardly an anti-Labour politician in Australia to-day—and not an anti-Labour newspaper—who, during the past twelve months, has not constantly kept up that tirade of unfair criticism, and mean abuse to gain political advantages.

Senator SENIOR.—That is the exordium, but what is the sermon going to be?

Senator FERRICKS.—An exhortation to cultivate the spirit of sanity, which seems to have received birth here to-night. We are told in the motion that the statement of the Colonial Secretary— emphatically sets forth that none of the captured Colonial Possessions of the German Empire will in any circumstances be returned to that Power.

I am opposed to that proposition. If the non-return of these islands to Germany, or any other nation, is going to mean a continuation of this world-wide war, I say let the islands go. Senator BAKHAP, at an earlier stage to-night, said that the peace terms would not be formulated by Australia, but by America. I agree with the honorable senator that America, at the present time, occupies a very important position. In fact, as I have said in various addresses, Professor Woodrow Wilson, in regard to the conclusions which will be arrived at on the termination of the war, is on a box-seat. He has already stated in plain, honest language that, so far as the United States is concerned, peace will be based on no annexations, no indemnities, and the freedom of the high seas.

Senator BAKHAP.—He has expressed himself in favour of the return of Alsace-Lorraine to France.

Senator FERRICKS.—With the consent of the people themselves, and we are all in favour of that.

Now with regard to the freedom of the seas? If any Australian citizen, or a member of the Senate, had during the past twelve months advocated that view, he would have been howled down, but

President Wilson sets it forth in these plain, unvarnished words—

A universal association of all the nations to maintain inviolate the security of the high seas for the common unhindered use of all the nations of the world.

Senator Colonel ROWELL.—They had that before the war started.

Senator FERRICKS.—Why do not the Imperial authorities say that they are prepared, as a basis of settlement, to concede the freedom of the seas? Have they said so? By no means.

Senator THOMAS.—They have always given it.

Senator FERRICKS.—To return to the point. The question of annexations and indemnities is a vital question in Russia to-day, and has been for some time past.

Senator MILLEN.—Who is to lead them seems to be the big question there to-day.

Senator FERRICKS.—The indications are that the people are going to lead. So far as Italy is concerned, do we know what is occurring there? We do not, although we can read between the lines and come to the conclusion that things are at least very much disturbed in that country. In view of these facts, is the Senate or is this Parliament on behalf of the people of Australia to pronounce for a continuance of the war for the doubtful privilege of holding a few islands in the Pacific? It may be said that we shall have extra territory, but it will bring a great responsibility.

Senator MILLEN.—And greater protection.

Senator FERRICKS.—There is another phase of that question. Against whom shall we be protected by the occupation of these islands? If the system of secret diplomacy is to continue as it has been carried on in the past, who is going to say that in ten or fifteen years Britain and Germany will not be fighting Russia and France, or Russia and Japan? We cannot say that, because if we look at what is, comparatively speaking, recent history, we are reminded that a few years ago Russia and Japan were at death grips, whereas to-day they are fighting on the one side. If the diplomats are to have their way, without any indorsement by the people, as to international relations, it is by no means a stretch of the imagination to suggest that within ten or

fifteen years Germany and Great Britain may be allied in fighting other nations.

Senator SENIOR.—Do you think that the state of Russia to-day is ideal?

Senator FERRICKS.—That question is entirely irrelevant. I am dealing with the question of what may occur between different nations. Until the time comes when the people have the right, and the undeniable right, of ratifying any agreement involving the nation in the catastrophe of warfare, I contend that anything may happen.

But coming to the question of the value of these islands from the Australian standpoint, how are we going to deal with them if they are allowed to remain in our possession? Australia so far has not been capable of successfully handling all the territory it has held. It has had a good few years now in which to develop the Northern Territory, but it has not done so. Until we develop our own country we have no right to look for more territory, and as soon as we do look for outside territory, then our real international responsibilities will begin.

There is a further phase of the question, and a very serious phase, too, to be considered. The acquisition of these islands would involve us to a great extent in the colour difficulty. In Queensland for many years we were cursed with the colour difficulty. But, thanks to Federation the Labour party in this Parliament were able to extract from a Liberal Government, in return for their support, the abolition of the kanakas. We in Queensland know what that has meant, and also what it has saved Queensland and Australia from. Despite calamity howlers to the contrary we know that it has been a blessing, not only to Queensland, but to the whole healthful life of Australia. An extension of the colour curse within the jurisdiction of Australia would inevitably follow our acquisition of these islands, and would not be in the interests of this young nation.

Senator BAKHAP.—The honorable senator's argument implies that we ought to get rid of New Guinea altogether.

Senator FERRICKS.—I have no desire to extend the colour evil. I believe that the time will come when commercialism will succeed in utilizing and exploiting the coloured labour of these

islands. We cannot contend that the natives are not entitled to employment in their own island homes, and Australia will then become more intimately concerned with this colour question.

Senator MILLEN.—Do I understand that the honorable senator is indifferent as to who occupies the islands?

Senator FERRICKS.—Yes; if their retention is going to prolong the war.

Senator SHANNON.—The war would not stop if we handed back these islands tomorrow.

Senator FERRICKS. — In my judgment the retention of these islands would not be in the interest of Australia. It would be futile for us to butt in —

Senator BAKHAP.—But we have butted in to the tune of nearly 400,000 men.

Senator FERRICKS. — Are we to go right ahead of all the nations which are opposing annexations and indemnities by saying that there shall be annexations? It appears to me that the whole question of annexations and indemnities can be dealt with in a peace settlement.

I hold that the passing of this motion would not be wise or diplomatic. It would be a grave mistake on our part, when America and other allied nations are declaring against annexations, to send forth the dictum that under no circumstances will Australia agree to the restoration of these islands to Germany. Assuming that we retain control of them; I have no doubt that in the not far distant future we shall have to adequately defend them. That implies that we shall have to adopt defensive measures in the Pacific, and after we have done that at immense cost to the Australian taxpayer we shall be obliged to go further.

Senator BAKHAP.—One of the six States of the Commonwealth is an insular State.

Senator REID.—Suppose that an enemy country obtained possession of these islands, would they not constitute a danger to Australia?

Senator FERRICKS.—In a few years' time our present enemies may be fighting side by side with us. Judging by the interjections of honorable senators, there is a feeling in this Chamber that Australia should stand out against the restoration of these islands to Germany. Personally, I believe that their retention would provide no compensation for another one, two, or

three years of this world-wide war, with all the untold misery attendant upon it, not to mention the financial burdens imposed upon the people and the awful welter of blood. If the conflict is to be continued until Germany has been beaten to her knees, until Prussian militarism has been crushed, it will go on for two or three years longer at least.

Senator SENIOR.—Then the honorable senator thinks that Germany ought not to be punished for the destruction of Belgium, Servia, or France?

Senator FERRICKS.—I did not say anything about those matters. Honorable senators opposite are pursuing their old tactics. They are not prepared to allow an honorable senator who differs from them to express his opinion. They desire to get him committed to some statement in the press or in *Hansard* out of which they can make political capital. I wonder if they realize that the recovery of conquered territory virtually involves blowing the invader out of the ground. In the Napoleonic wars, after the Germans had defeated Napoleon at Leipzig, after the naval battles of the Nile and Trafalgar, after the Peninsular war and the grand climax at Waterloo, the map of Europe was scarcely changed at all.

Senator MILLEN.—Do I understand the honorable senator to say that Europe has not changed during the past 100 years?

Senator FERRICKS.—No. It is no exaggeration to say that if we are to continue the war until Germany is beaten flat, and until the conquered territories have been restored, the struggle will proceed for an indefinite period. Personally, I agree with President Wilson that the inhabitants of those territories should be empowered to say under which flag they will live.

Senator REID.—President Wilson has not said that.

Senator FERRICKS.—He has practically said that. Why should we lay it down that the war shall be continued till certain parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina are given to Servia, certain parts of Alsace and Lorraine to France, and certain parts of Austria to Italy? It may happen that while the inhabitants of Alsace may desire to live under the French flag, the people of Lorraine may prefer German rule. Are we to continue the war until Russia gets the Dardanelles

and the provinces bordering on the Bosphorus?

Before we commit ourselves to a motion of such significance as that under consideration we should endeavour to ascertain whether the Imperial authorities still hold the opinion that the war must be continued until the Kaiser has been driven to his knees or marooned, and until all those tracts of country which I have mentioned have been restored to the Powers concerned. Are these the only conditions of peace which the Imperial Government will consider to-day? Will they not discuss peace terms until all these practically unattainable objects have been achieved? In justice to the soldiers who are fighting for the Allied cause, in justice to the workers who are bearing the greater portion of the burden, it is time we were told when the Imperial authorities will be prepared to discuss peace conditions.

Senator HENDERSON.—The honorable senator has been told that a score of times.

Senator FERRICKS.—Senator Henderson has evidently not been following my remarks. If this war is to continue a few years longer—

Senator SENIOR.—Who started it? Only those nations which the honorable senator is defending to-night.

Senator FERRICKS.—That interjection is on a par with the statements which usually come from honorable senators opposite. We had a lot of them during the recent election campaign. Because we dared to say things which had been published in the London newspapers twelve months previously, we were called pro-Germans. I intend to quote a few of the statements which have been made in those journals.

The PRESIDENT.—I hope that they are relevant to the motion.

Senator FERRICKS.—They are. This is a letter which appeared in the *London Economist* of 12th June, 1916—

If we refuse to discuss the terms of peace to-day we take the responsibility of another twelve months of war or more. Who in the world can face such a prospect without a hope that it may prove unnecessary, and that terms of peace satisfactory both to ourselves and to our Allies may, after all, be arranged?

That letter is from Lord Beauchamp, a one-time Governor of New South Wales. Lord Brassey, twelve months ago, discussed the question of no annexations

just as plainly as I have done to-night. As a matter of fact, there has been more toleration exhibited by the authorities at the centre of the Empire than has been exhibited in Australia. Then Lord Loreburn, an ex-Chancellor of the Exchequer, stated that many of the Ministers of Great Britain have done what I have accused some honorable senators of doing. They have said that the war must be continued until Germany has been utterly crushed.

Senator MILLEN.—You forget those men were trying to get volunteers to fight, anyway, and you were not.

Senator FERRICKS.—Perhaps the Minister will let me finish. Lord Loreburne declared that the sentiments of these Ministers had been taken up by the minor gods outside, had stiffened the backs of the German people, and helped the Kaiser to delude the Germans that they were fighting a defensive battle.

Senator SENIOR.—This is good stuff.

Senator FERRICKS.—The honorable senator might think it good stuff, and I have no doubt that he is prepared to make contemptible political capital out of it. Sentiments expressed here, and published in the British papers, provided very good material for the Kaiser and Prussian militarism. Statements made by Mr. Hughes and Senator Pearce as Minister for Defence would suggest that Australia is out to crush the German Empire, and, of course, the German people have thus been deluded into believing that they are fighting a defensive war.

Senator Colonel ROWELL.—And so are a majority of the working men of England.

Senator FERRICKS.—Quite so; but the remarks of many of these irresponsible people have stiffened the backs of the German people. I trust the motion will not be carried, for I do not think it is in the interests of Australia that it should be adopted.

Debate (on motion by Senator O'KEEFE) adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT.

AUSTRALIAN REPRESENTATION AT
WASHINGTON.

Motion (by Senator MILLEN) put—
That the Senate do now adjourn.

Senator FERRICKS (Queensland)
[10.17].—I wish to refer briefly to a

matter which was under discussion this evening, namely, the appointment of an official representative of Australia in America.

The PRESIDENT.—Order! The honorable senator cannot do that.

Senator FERRICKS.—Then may I refer to the appointment of an official representative abroad without specifically mentioning America?

The PRESIDENT.—So long as the honorable senator does not transgress the Standing Orders, he may do so.

Senator FERRICKS.—I desire to say that I was in favour of the motion as originally presented; but subsequently it was amended. I could not agree to the appointment of an official representative to France, or Italy, or any other country, in a capacity of a diplomat, and I wish to dissociate myself from that aspect of the proposal. It appears to me—

The PRESIDENT.—Order! The honorable senator is distinctly transgressing my ruling. He had full and ample opportunity—and he took advantage of it—to express his views when the motion was before the Senate this evening. It is obvious that, if any honorable senator could discuss a motion at a later stage, the debate would be interminable. I must rule that the honorable senator is distinctly out of order.

Senator FERRICKS.—All the same, I did not have an opportunity of discussing it.

The PRESIDENT.—Order! The honorable senator must not in any way reflect on the Chair. He had full and ample opportunity of discussing this question, and he availed himself of that opportunity. The motion was amended, by leave, to which the honorable senator could have objected. If he had done so, the motion then could not have been amended, but would have had to be submitted subsequently in a different form. The honorable senator's rights were protected to the fullest degree by the usage and forms of the Senate, and it is not becoming of him now to reflect on the Chair.

Senator FERRICKS.—I did not desire in any way, Mr. President, to reflect on the Chair. I merely wished to say I did not have an opportunity of discussing the motion, for the reason that Senator Bak-hap subsequently amended it.

The PRESIDENT.—No; he did not. The motion was amended by leave of the Senate; and, if the honorable senator had availed himself of his right to object, his objection would have been fatal to the request for leave to amend the motion.

Senator FERRICKS.—I did not want to do that, although I did not approve of it.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Senate adjourned at 10.22 p.m.

House of Representatives.

Thursday, 9 August, 1917.

Mr. SPEAKER took the chair at 2.30 p.m., and read prayers.

TRANSFERS TO ARTILLERY.

Mr. GROOM.—Yesterday the honorable member for Adelaide asked me why soldiers in camp were being allowed to transfer to the artillery. I promised to make an inquiry, and I am now informed that no transfers to the artillery have been authorized since the 31st May last, the date on which recruiting for the artillery stopped.

TRAVELLING OF MEMBERS.

Mr. CORSER.—Has the Prime Minister noticed the absence during recent divisions in this House of a number of the members of the Opposition? Is he aware that it is reported that the reason for their absence is the fact that the unions have declared the coal used for the trains running between Sydney and Melbourne to be black? Is the Government providing free steamer fares for the travelling of these members? Is it the intention of those who refuse for the reason mentioned to travel by train to attend the sittings of this Parliament to refund their Parliamentary remuneration for the period of their absence?

Mr. HUGHES.—I have noticed the absence of some members of the Opposition, and can quite believe in some of their cases that the cause is that communication between Sydney and Melbourne has been somewhat interfered with by the industrial disturbance in New South Wales. I have read that the unions have declared

coal to be "black," though, so far as I know, that declaration has had no effect on the colour of coal. I am not aware that the Government is providing free steamer fares for members, nor do I know that members who may refuse to travel by train at the present time have any intention of foregoing any portion of their Parliamentary remuneration. I should be very much surprised to learn of such an intention. It would indicate such an amazing departure from what my long experience of members of Parliament has taught me to expect that I would begin to believe that the millennium was at hand.

Mr. WEST.—I should like to claim the sympathy of the Prime Minister in my present position. I am unable to proceed to my home because of the incompetence of the engine-drivers on the railway trains in New South Wales. Will the right honorable gentleman render me some assistance?

Mr. HUGHES.—I shall be glad to do what the honorable member asks. What particular assistance does he need? What does he miss most?

CANBERRA ARSENAL.

Mr. GREGORY.—In view of the large sum mentioned in the Budget statement in connexion with the proposal to build an arsenal at Canberra, I ask the Prime Minister if the House will be given an opportunity to express its opinion on the subject before the country has been committed to the expenditure?

Mr. HUGHES.—Yes; the House will have an opportunity to discuss the proposal.

PRICE OF MEAT.

Mr. MACKAY.—Has the attention of the Prime Minister been drawn to a letter appearing in the *Age* newspaper this morning stating the prices paid for beef and mutton at the Queensland State butchers' shops, and also at Melbourne? Is the Prime Minister aware that the beef and mutton sold in the Queensland State shops is frozen, and has been commandeered at 3½d. per lb., while the price paid by the Imperial Government for a similar article for the use of the troops is 4½d. per lb.; also that the prices quoted are for cash only?

Mr. HUGHES.—I was not aware of the facts to which the honorable member

directs my attention. The letter which appears in this morning's *Age* was brought under my notice by the committee of management of the Waterside Workers Federation, which attached considerable importance to it as an indication that the prices of meat here are much higher than they ought to be. I was not aware that the Queensland Government had commandeered the beef sold in the Queensland State shops at 3½d. per lb., and that the price paid by the British Government for similar meat is 4½d. per lb., or that the prices quoted are for cash only. The House and the country is obliged to the honorable member for making these facts known, because statements which have appeared in the press have had the effect of greatly misleading the people both as to the prices of meat, and the reason for the increases.

FOODSTUFFS IN COOL STORE.

Mr. FENTON.—The Minister promised nearly a fortnight ago that a monthly return of the quantity of foodstuffs in cool storage in Australia would be furnished. Is such a return now available? If not, will the Minister do his best to expedite its production?

Mr. JENSEN.—In pursuance of my promise, I have given the instruction that returns shall be made available monthly, and I hope to lay the first on the table within a day or two.

PAY OFFICE, VICTORIA BARRACKS, SYDNEY.

Mr. GROOM.—Yesterday the honorable member for Nepean asked whether the departmental Board appointed to inquire into the working of the pay office at the Victoria Barracks, Sydney, had finished its investigation and made a report. I am informed that the Royal Commission on Navy and Defence Administration recommended that the Board of Inquiry should be disbanded, as the scope of the Royal Commission is very much more extensive, and fully covers the ground of the Board of Inquiry. This recommendation was approved. All data collected by the Board of Inquiry have been made available to the Royal Commission.

COAL MINERS' THREAT.

IMPORTATION OF COAL.

Mr. BOYD.—In view of a statement made in Sydney yesterday by Mr. Willis,

secretary of the Australian Coal and Shale Employees Union, that the coal mine employees were out to fight the Government to the last ditch, will the Prime Minister see that some provision is made for the importation of coal, so that the other industries of Australia shall not be hampered and placed under the control of the executive of the Coal Miners Union?

Mr. HUGHES.—I have not seen in the press the statement to which the honorable member refers. I would point out to him, however, that the importation of coal is not now a feasible project. As far as I know, we could not import coal, even if we desired to do so, in sufficient quantities to have the slightest effect upon the industrial position of Australia in the near future. It is not to be deduced from my remarks that I for one moment agree with the position said to have been taken up by the coal miners, but we cannot obtain the shipping to bring coal in sufficient quantities to this country.

COST OF LIVING.

GOVERNMENT POLICY.

Mr. HUGHES (Bendigo—Prime Minister and Attorney-General) [2.42] (*By leave*).—I desire to make a statement in regard to shipping and the cost of living. Yesterday I was asked a question as to the attitude of the Government in relation to the refusal of the waterside workers to load wheat and flour for foreign countries. I said then that the Government would take an early opportunity of declaring its policy in regard to this matter. It is understood that the situation arose out of a belief which is held, not only by the wharf labourers, but by other unionists, that prices are unduly high, and that the refusal to load wheat and flour for export would have the effect of reducing them.

The Government, of course, is charged with the conduct of the industrial and general affairs of this country, and its business is to see that the products for export get away in order that the industrial as well as the general welfare of the Commonwealth may be conserved. This morning I had an interview with the committee of management of the Waterside Workers Federation, at which I pointed out the position which would be created by the refusal to load vessels with wheat and flour. I am glad to be able to announce

that the committee gave me an assurance that, so far from desiring to hamper the Government in its war policy, the waterside workers would, without hesitation or delay, proceed to work any vessels that were engaged in war work or in what might be termed war work. In pursuance of that assurance, instructions were issued, and the men are now standing by ready to load, or, perhaps by this time are actually loading, the two vessels to carry British and French wheat.

There is another steamer about which something was said yesterday, but so far as its immediate relation to the war is concerned, it falls within a different class. I put the matter clearly, and I wish to report what I said this morning to my friends the waterside workers. I told them that the business of the country must be carried on, and that it was not for them to say what ships they would or would not load, otherwise they would usurp the functions of the Government of the country, and our position would be farcical.

I desire now to state the position of the Government with regard to the alleged exploitation of the public through the excessive cost of living. The Government has considered the matter, and has decided to remit it forthwith to the Inter-State Commission, with a request that inquiries be made immediately in regard to the prices of the main staple commodities of daily life, the prices in relation to the cost of production, and the effect, if any, of the exportation of foodstuffs or any other products upon the local prices.

The Commission will enter upon its labours immediately. Later it can extend its inquiry, but I apprehend that this community is more concerned about the prices of the staple commodities of daily life than with any other. The Commission will proceed at once to deal with the question, and as it makes its report on each commodity the Government will take such action from time to time, as the circumstances demand.

Mr. TUDOR (Yarra) [2.47]—(*By leave*).—The Prime Minister says that he received this morning from the representatives of the waterside workers an assurance that they were prepared to go on with what is known as war work. I wish to point out that the waterside workers have not at any time objected to

load vessels engaged in that class of work. The resolution which, it is stated, they passed, and to which exception has been taken by certain persons, concerned the loading of the *Houtmann* and certain other vessels going to the East. The Melbourne wharf labourers have an understanding to the effect that they would not load vessels with foodstuffs that were not required in connexion with war work, but, they say, no resolution was carried. In order to substantiate my statement as to the position they take up regarding war work, that is, the loading of foodstuffs or other goods for defence requirements, I need only refer to what was done last week in connexion with a shipment of 50 tons of onions to New Zealand. As soon as Mr. Manson, the New Zealand Government agent here, reported that he had received a cablegram from the New Zealand Government that 25 tons of these onions were required for defence purposes, the wharf labourers withdrew their objection to the loading of that portion of the consignment. What they objected to was the exploitation of the market by the action of certain men in exporting a sufficient quantity to enable local prices to be increased. As a matter of fact, the price of onions had been more than doubled within a month.

Mr. FENTON.—Within a week.

Mr. TUDOR.—I understand that in little more than a month the price of onions rose from about £5 to £11 per ton. Since the wharf labourers announced their objection to load onions for New Zealand the price has dropped a little.

Mr. McWILLIAMS.—The honorable member would not like to grow onions for much less than £10 per ton.

Mr. TUDOR.—I do not know what is the cost of production per acre or per ton, but I have always said that no exception can be taken to any legitimate increase in prices due to an increase in the wages of those producing the commodities or foodstuffs involved. I made that statement in the Melbourne Town Hall last week when speaking on the cost of living, but the *Argus* did not publish it. I said then that I would do my best to see that producers secured any legitimate increase to which they were entitled by reason of an increase in the cost of production. What I object to is the practice, when

there is 1d. increase in wages, of adding 1s. to the price of the commodity produced.

I should now like to deal with the matter of remitting such questions as the cost of living to the Inter-State Commission. In the last Parliament, about the beginning of March, the honorable member for Maribyrnong and others drew attention to the proposed prohibition of the importation of luxuries, and I myself threw across the table to the Prime Minister a note upon the subject. That question of the importation of luxuries was remitted to the Inter-State Commission, but, although five months have elapsed, not a single report has been presented to Parliament. Shall we have to wait as long for a report on the prices of commodities? I do not say one word about the *personnel* of the Commission, the members of which have done good work, and one, I know, is busily engaged at the Treasury.

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—I rise to a point of order. I submit that the honorable member for Yarra has no right whatever to make an argumentative and controversial speech at this stage under cover of the leave generously granted to him by the House.

Mr. SPEAKER.—I can only say that the honorable member for Yarra informed me that he wished to make certain statements in reference to observations by the Prime Minister. I told the honorable member that it would be necessary for him to obtain the leave of the House, and that leave has been given. I am not in a position to be able to dictate to the honorable member what he shall say.

Mr. TUDOR.—If honorable members opposite object to statements being made in this way, they have in their hands a simple remedy, seeing that the Standing Orders allow them at any time to prevent an honorable member being further heard.

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—The honorable member is abusing the privileges of the House.

Mr. TUDOR.—I am not abusing the privileges of the House. I am referring to what the Prime Minister said, and I submit that the waterside workers have never refused—

Mr. HUGHES.—I never said they had. I dealt with facts, but the honorable member is simply going on and on.

Mr. TUDOR.—I am also dealing with facts, and the first fact is that the waterside workers never refused to deal with stuff for war work.

Mr. HUGHES.—That is not true; they refused to load the *Medic* and the *Runic*.

Mr. SPEAKER.—I must ask the Prime Minister to withdraw the statement that what the honorable member for Yarra has said is not true.

Mr. HUGHES.—Of course I withdraw the statement; but every one knows that what I say is perfectly correct, and the honorable member himself knows it perfectly well!

Mr. SPEAKER.—Order!

Mr. TUDOR.—I should like to know what staple commodities were submitted to the Inter-State Commission for inquiry, and whether we shall have to wait as long for a report as we have had to wait in the other case I referred to.

UNEMPLOYMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS.

Mr. FENTON.—Will the Minister for Works and Railways, with a view to absorbing a number of the unemployed in our midst, almost immediately put some public works in operation, even though he may have to anticipate the sanction of Parliament in certain instances?

Mr. WATT.—The honorable member indicated this morning that he proposed to ask this question, and I have since been in consultation with some of the technical officers. I have not yet been able to go through the list of proposed works. Some of the proposals on the Estimates are a continuation of old works; indeed, there are very few new works, and in regard to the latter it would be necessary, even in order to anticipate parliamentary authority, to obtain Treasury consent. Speaking broadly, if I can facilitate the early embarkation on those works, I shall do so with pleasure.

PAPERS.

The following papers were presented:—

Defence Act—Regulations Amended—Statutory Rules 1917, Nos. 163-167.

Public Service Act—Regulations Amended—Statutory Rules 1917, No. 160.

War Precautions Act—Regulations Amended—Statutory Rules 1917, Nos. 155, 156, 162, 168.

MURRAY WATERS SCHEME.

Mr. SAMPSON.—Can the Minister for Works and Railways inform the House whether sites have been selected for storage on the Upper Murray under the Federal and State scheme, and, if so, whether it is proposed to proceed with the work without delay?

Mr. WATT.—I am afraid I am not able to answer the honorable member quite as specifically as he might like. I am just about to take over control of the Murray Waters Commission, and I have not yet had a chance to consult with the existing members. I do not think the site of the Upper Murray storage dam has been definitely determined, but some 30 or 40 borings have taken place, which have more or less proved the capacity of certain ground to hold the stream when dammed. I shall take an early opportunity to ascertain the exact facts up to date, and confer with the honorable member later.

SMALL WOOL-GROWERS.

Mr. RODGERS.—Will the Prime Minister increase the facilities for very small wool-growers to dispose of their little lots in the country? At present the limit is £10; and I point out that they have the experience of last year's appraisalment to enable them to see that they are not unfairly done by. In view of the fact that at present they have to wait many months for the returns from the Central Board, it would be a great convenience to allow ordinary buyers to purchase on the spot.

Mr. HUGHES.—I shall put the matter before the Central Wool Committee, and see how far the honorable member's views can be met.

DEFENCE REGULATIONS.

Dr. MALONEY.—I should like to ask you, Mr. Speaker, what is the proper time to ask questions concerning the multitude of regulations submitted, especially from the Defence Department?

Mr. SPEAKER.—The honorable member is at liberty to put any question without notice, when notices of motion are called on, or, if he prefers, he may put his questions on the business-paper in the ordinary way. Now is the time to ask questions without notice, before the business of the day is called on.

Dr. MALONEY.—Then I should like to know whether there is any rule of the House under which these regulations may be discussed?

Mr. SPEAKER.—The regulations may be discussed on a motion of which notice has been given. If the honorable member desires to discuss regulations, he can put a notice of motion on the business-paper, or discuss them on Supply or on the motion for adjournment.

ADJOURNMENT (Formal).

NORTHERN TERRITORY: REAPPOINTMENT OF DR. GILRUTH.

Mr. SPEAKER.—I have received an intimation from the honorable member for Brisbane that he desires to move the adjournment of the House to discuss a definite matter of urgent public importance, viz., "The reappointment of Dr. Gilruth as Administrator of the Northern Territory."

Five honorable members having risen in their places,

Question proposed.

Mr. FINLAYSON (Brisbane) [3.0].—The matter with which I wish to deal was referred to by me and other honorable members during the debate on the Supply Bill on the 11th July last. Since that date I have secured such further information as justifies me in making a special feature of this question because of the contradictory statements that are in circulation. When I made my remarks on the 11th July I asked the Deputy Leader of the Government and the Treasurer if any offer for the purchase of the Northern Territory had been made as reported to any member of the Government or to the Government as a whole. Sir John Forrest replied, "I have never heard of it;" and Mr. Joseph Cook said, "None whatever; absolutely none." I am quite willing to believe that those honorable gentlemen were stating what they believed to be true, and what, so far as they were concerned, was true. But that there was something in the statement is borne out by the following paragraph which appeared in the *Age* of the 6th July—

The Minister for Home and Territories (Mr. Glynn), to whom it was alleged the offer of purchase had been made, admitted yesterday that the Administrator had made some reference to a purchase of the Territory, but he did not regard the matter seriously. Mr. Glynn said that when last he was in office as

Minister for External Affairs, three years ago, when going into the position of the Territory with the Administrator, he remembered Dr. Gilruth casually mentioning that he thought a chartered company would take the Territory up, pay off the debt, and develop the country. He (Mr. Glynn) replied in effect that such a proposal did not commend itself to him. No such offer as mentioned by Mr. Bedford was ever made to the Government, nor did he regard Dr. Gilruth's observation as more than a casual remark, strengthening his belief in the possibilities of the country. The Minister added that they had reached a stage of development from which they could not revert to chartered companies. A chartered company was the next stage after a protectorate, and then followed the creation of a Crown colony.

I wish to submit the following sworn affidavit on this matter:—

I, Randolph Bedford, of Sydney, in the State of New South Wales, journalist, do solemnly and sincerely declare—

On the afternoon of the 12th February, 1917, I was visiting the Hon. F. W. Bamford, M.P., in the Minister's room at the Department of Home and Territories, Melbourne. As I was leaving the room I met a Mr. Rigby, who told me he wanted to introduce me "to somebody." I, with him, entered a room near the Minister's room, and was introduced to Dr. Gilruth, Administrator of the Northern Territory. Dr. Gilruth complained that I had been attacking his administration, and I told him that I had not yet finished the attack, and that the administration seemed to dislike Australians.

In the conversation ensuing, Dr. Gilruth said that the Territory was difficult to administer, and that, on behalf of a syndicate, he had offered the Commonwealth £5,000,000 for the purchase of the Territory, and to spend £10,000,000 within two years of the purchase. I asked him how he proposed to govern the Territory in such event, and he said it would be administered by a company on the lines of the British Chartered Company of South Africa. I said that that was no good to White Australia, and that I would do my best against any sale of a Territory four times the size of France at any price. He then hurriedly told me that the information, unsought by me, was not for publication, and a few minutes later I left for the Sydney express.

I have not so far published the conversation, and would not now make this declaration did I not believe that many of the Liberals of the new Parliament to be suspect of complaisance or agreement in this matter, and did I not apprehend danger to Australia's development and Australia's ideal destiny of a high wage country for the white man. For those reasons the confidence forced upon me I now break with much pleasure, so that Australians can demand full particulars of the offer, and pronounce against its repetition.

And I make this declaration with full knowledge of the penalties provided for wilful and corrupt perjury.

RANDOLPH BEDFORD.

Declared before me, W. J. RIORDAN, J.P., a justice of the peace for the State of Queensland, at Brisbane, sixth day of June, 1917.

In a letter published in the *Age* of the 21st July and in the Brisbane papers of the 20th July Mr. Bedford supported his sworn affidavit. I shall merely read a few extracts from the letter, which honorable members will find in the press if they wish to follow the matter in fuller detail—

The *Age* of Thursday, 5th July, reports Dr. Gilruth as saying:—That he had made no offer as stated, that he had in mind no syndicate, nor had he been approached by anybody in connexion with a proposed purchase. It was true that he had mentioned the matter lightly to Mr. Bedford in the course of a conversation. He had also asked Mr. Bedford to publish nothing on the subject. There was no warrant for Mr. Bedford's statement beyond the fact that he (Dr. Gilruth) had informed him that he had asked the Minister, in the course of a general conversation, whether he thought the Government would sell the Territory. The statement by Dr. Gilruth is, in spirit and essence, untrue. . . . He did not mention the matter "lightly," he said it, forcibly, seriously, and as if disgusted at the refusal of the offer, and rather pitying the intelligence of the refusers. He used the words "offer" and "syndicate," and that his intention was serious and not "light" is proved by the details he had already thought out and had given me. . . . Mr. Glynn admits the offer was made, but says he didn't take it "seriously." I don't care whether he took it badly or standing up, or with his hands full of ripe bananas. He had the offer. Dr. Gilruth says that he made no offer, and that "Mr. Glynn's reply was that the Government wouldn't consider the proposal." Do these men know the meaning of words? "Offer not taken seriously"—"proposal not considered"—and yet there was "no offer" and no proposal. Mr. Glynn says that he looked on it as "strengthening Dr. Gilruth's belief in the possibilities of the country." Dr. Gilruth told me that the Commonwealth would never do any good with the Territory.

Here we have a clear and emphatic statement in a sworn affidavit that an offer for the purchase of the Northern Territory was made, although we have no cognisance of the details. Further than that, the Minister for Home and Territories admits that an offer was made.

MR. GLYNN.—A man admits something that he has previously denied. I did not use the word admit.

MR. FINLAYSON.—I assure the honorable member that I am not to-day making an attack on the administration of his Department. Neither do I wish that this matter should be regarded in any sense as a party question, because we have every ground for believing that every member of the House is anxious to do the best possible for the Northern Territory.

Mr. KELLY.—If your action is entirely non-party, why do you give countenance to the obviously untrue statement of Mr. Bedford that any member of this House wishes to infringe the White Australia policy for the Northern Territory?

Mr. FINLAYSON.—The statement is Mr. Bedford's, not mine. I am quite prepared to believe that every member of the House is anxious to assist the administration in connexion with the Northern Territory. Its development is a heavy and difficult problem, and it is because I believe that by the reappointment of Dr. Gilruth we have only increased our difficulties that I am raising the question to-day. Unfortunately we have too much evidence that during the period of Dr. Gilruth's administration in the Northern Territory there has been nothing but trouble and disappointment. There have been several years of expenditure without any result, and at times there have been internal troubles of a very serious character.

Mr. SAMPSON.—What troubles?

Mr. FINLAYSON.—Difficulties in settlement, the industrial position, and the utter lack of development.

Mr. SAMPSON.—Is not the honorable member aware that industrial troubles were just as numerous in the case of the freezing works as in connexion with Dr. Gilruth's administration?

Mr. FINLAYSON.—The industrial troubles have been so painfully frequent, and so unfortunately bitter, during Dr. Gilruth's term of office, that there is not only disappointment with regard to the past, but also considerable apprehension in regard to the future. This statement is borne out by the fact that when Dr. Gilruth was returning to the Northern Territory, the residents gave an exhibition of their feelings in regard to his re-appointment. The following report appeared in the *Brisbane Standard* on the 31st July:—

A mass meeting was held in Darwin to protest against the re-appointment of Dr. Gilruth as Administrator of the Territory. The Mayor presided, and numerous speakers referred specifically to various acts of alleged maladministration, particularly in the Mines Department, the Jensen inquiry, and the Batchelor and Daly River farm experiments, the limited knowledge of the Administrator, his exclusion of experts, the suppression of facts, and misleading statements handed to the Southern press, and the continuous misrepresentation of the various industries. . . . The meeting vigorously protested against the mock reception

to be tendered the Administrator, as engineered by an official clique of puppets. . . . Some severe criticisms of inquiries as to the method of eliminating some of the troublesome officials, not subservient to the Administrator, were passed, notably, the cases of Dr. Jensen and Mr. Beckett.

It was suggested that a mass meeting be held outside the hall when the reception is to be tendered to the Administrator by card only, to show the real feeling of the citizens.

In regard to the same matter, the following telegram appeared in the *Age* on the 7th of this month:—

When the Administrator arrived in Darwin on Monday last the new Labour Mayor (Mr. D. C. Watts) and his Labour councillors were not there to welcome him. On Monday evening a meeting, called by the secretary of the A.W.U., Councillor Harold Nelson, was held "to express indignation at the re-appointment of Dr. Gilruth, and resentment that the new Labour Mayor had not been asked to welcome the Administrator." The meeting was held in the Town Hall, and unionists gathered in force. The speakers condemned the Administrator, one calling on the new Mayor, as "high sheriff of the city," to eject Dr. Gilruth from the Territory as an undesirable. Another urged workers to do no more work until the Administrator had been "booted" out of the Territory. All complained indignantly that the Mayor had not been accorded his proper place as the first citizen of the town in a welcome to the Administrator.

On Tuesday evening, in the Town Hall, Dr. Gilruth was welcomed home at a social evening by the citizens.

These reports show that there is among a section of the community in Darwin and the Northern Territory generally a very strong personal feeling against the methods adopted by the Administrator.

Mr. GLYNN.—Even in this House there are two opinions on everything.

Mr. FINLAYSON.—The division between the two sections is much more closely marked in the Northern Territory than it is in this House, because, while we have respect for each other's opinions, and admit the right of each man to hold his own views on political matters, it seems that only one view can be held or admitted in the Northern Territory, and that is the view of those who are willing to bow the knee to Baal in the person of the Administrator. For others there is neither use nor room. At any rate, we have the statement of these newspapers of Melbourne and Brisbane showing what the feeling of the majority of the citizens of Darwin is, at any rate of those who are looked upon as the working section of the community.

Dr. Gilruth's term of office has been marked by severe and almost continuous

difficulties between himself and his officers. It would seem that no officer can please him unless he is willing to say "yes" when the Administrator says "yes," or "no" when the Administrator says "no." Here let me quote from a statement made by Dr. Jensen which appeared in the *Brisbane Worker* on 12th July last—

Instead of attempting to create *bonâ fide* settlement, the Administration has handed over the best of the country to a monopoly, has stunted the mining industry by changes at a time when it was making headway, and has killed all hope of agricultural settlement by putting a large number of good, hard-working settlers on unsuitable land, treating them harshly, and dictating to them as if they were children.

The Land Board, consisting of an accountant (a new chum to the Territory, who has hardly been off the railway line), a survey draughtsman (with a minimum experience of land), and a clerk, decides where people should settle by deliberation in Darwin.

George Ryland, who had extensive experience of land in Queensland, having ploughed his old bicycle through every part of this State, was discarded as Director of Lands to make room for pets of the Administrator. No wonder most of the settlers had to leave through starvation.

The poor postmaster, a widely respected man, became so worried that he blew his brains out, and one of the unfortunate Daly settlers drowned himself.

Glynn also laments that he cannot get married men with families to stay in the Northern Territory. That, too, is essentially the Administrator's fault. His alterations of working hours, school hours, and office hours have created conditions intolerable to all domestic life among those who are in the Public Service and have families. The Public Service Association protested again and again.

I can supplement that statement by a letter that I have received from a man who has abandoned his selection on the Daly River. I knew him in Brisbane. He went to the Northern Territory to take up one of the blocks on the Daly River, and he wrote to me on the 6th November of last year as follows:—

You will see by the address that we have left the Daly. This was the only course left for us, as the treatment was abominable. One of the settlers has got his clearance through the influence of one of the senators who came here (Senator Newland), and now, owing to the treatment we are receiving from the officials, I am appealing to you to help us. I received your letter some few weeks ago that you sent up the line to me, also the official's letter, and I am satisfied that we shall get no justice from him. You will have read enough about the Territory, but what must it be for us that are here?

The developmental policy of the Northern Territory under the administration of Dr. Gilruth has been on wrong lines. Whatever Dr. Jensen means by the statement that the best parts of the land have been given to a certain monopoly, there is, at any rate, a suspicion in the minds of many people that when Dr. Gilruth made that offer of £5,000,000 for the Northern Territory under the conditions specified, the company behind him was the same company that has established meat works at Darwin, and which has secured a very large control over the lands of the Northern Territory for grazing purposes. It is only reasonable that this company should have behind it reasonable facilities for growing cattle, and keeping its meat works fully employed, and I do not object, so long as the conditions under which it secured control of that land do not preclude other settlers who are anxious to do the same class of work from having an equal opportunity with it; but if there is any connexion between Dr. Gilruth and Vestey Bros., then at once we have an illuminating comment in regard to the offer that is said to have been made.

MR. SAMPSON. — Does the honorable member say that there is any connexion between them?

MR. FINLAYSON. — I do not. I say that there is suspicion in the minds of the public that there is a connexion between them.

MR. SAMPSON. — The honorable member should not make such a statement unless he has reasonable grounds for making it.

MR. FINLAYSON. — Can the honorable member deny it?

MR. SAMPSON. — The honorable member is making the charge.

MR. FINLAYSON. — I am not making any charge.

MR. SAMPSON. — The honorable member is indicating one.

MR. FINLAYSON. — I am indicating that inquiries in that direction might show the inspiration of the offer that is said to have been made. At any rate, my impression is that the administration of the Northern Territory under Dr. Gilruth has not only been on wrong lines for securing the best results, but has also been carried out in such a fashion as to irritate the people who have gone to the Territory. After all the money that has been expended and the efforts that have been made to settle the very fine land along the

Daly River, there is absolute and complete failure. I have my own ideas regarding the development of the Northern Territory, which I may state during the Budget debate. It seems to me that not only does Dr. Gilruth find ways and means for the development of the Territory along the lines not likely to lead to success, but that he has a penchant for irritating those who are desirous of developing it. Whether he is seeking to help Messrs. Vestey Brothers, as perhaps, the only means of developing the Territory, may be open to argument, but that has been the effect of his administration. Not even the building of railway lines or other developmental work seems to him to offer like opportunities for development. I think that the mining industry should be encouraged equally with the pastoral industry. Dr. Gilruth's conduct generally is well set out in a letter which was published in the *Brisbane Standard* on the 19th July. It is therein stated that—

The administration of the Northern Territory during the term the Federal Government has controlled it has been on the lines of the German Crown Colony. There has been in the Territory an absolute autocracy, no popular representation of any kind whatever, no means for the people to voice their grievances (as there is in a subdued way in the Legislative Councils of British Crown colonies); there has been a system of espionage, accompanied by victimization of every official or private individual, worker, or business man who ventured to express his disapproval of the brutal Hunnish ways of the administration. "Black listing" of workers who were not potential scabs was openly practised by the Administration, and instructions sent to the Departments not to employ those who were black-listed. Men who scabbed on the unions were shown favours and given preference. In every way Hunnish methods were followed.

Let me dwell briefly on the administration of the Northern Territory from the financial point of view. The figures that I propose to give have been obtained from the summary of Australian financial statistics recently issued by the Commonwealth Statistician. This officer shows that the deficiency in the accounts of the Northern Territory was, for the year 1910-11, £166,856; for the year 1911-12, £364,368; for the year 1912-13, £388,658; for the year 1913-14, £458,878; for the year 1914-15, £391,862; for the year 1915-16, £642,512; and for the year 1916-17, according to the information given to us by the Treasury yesterday, £690,555.

Mr. Finlayson.

Mr. KELLY.—Does that include the railways?

Mr. FINLAYSON.—It includes the Port Augusta and the Pine Creek railways. On the 30th June the total deficiency was £2,778,265. This matter calls for serious and close attention. On the average, we have lost £500,000 in the Territory every year.

Mr. SAMPSON.—That is a legacy under the agreement with South Australia.

Mr. FINLAYSON.—No. In 1910-11 the deficiency was only £166,000, and it has grown under Dr. Gilruth's administration to £690,000.

Mr. GLYNN.—I have prepared a memorandum analyzing the position, which I shall lay on the table to-morrow.

Mr. FINLAYSON.—The Minister told me some time ago that he was preparing a memorandum, and I hope that this discussion may induce him to give attention to matters which might otherwise be overlooked. As only a minute or two of the time allowed to me under the Standing Orders remains, I must pass over a good many matters that I had intended to mention regarding the detrimental effects of Dr. Gilruth's administration. I submit that the remedy for the present position can be stated under four headings. The first thing to be done is to immediately recall Dr. Gilruth. Every one was disappointed that the Government, when it had an opportunity to get away from the experience of the past few years, did not appoint to the Administratorship some one with better qualifications for the position. Very few in the Territory wanted Dr. Gilruth back, and people generally down here did not expect that he would be re-appointed. As I said on the 11th July, the only comfort we have is that the re-appointment is for a short term, and I suggest Dr. Gilruth's immediate recall. I suggest, too, the combination of the administrative and judicial offices. I do not know why the Administrator should not also be the judicial officer. The population is so small that, with proper administration, there would not be too much work for one man if the two offices were combined. Then all the Northern Territory Departments should be reorganized. I am informed that these Departments are notoriously over-staffed, and exist more for the sake of the officers than for their use to the State. Lastly, I suggest the appointment of a Royal Commission to

inquire into the administration of the Territory, and to advise Parliament as to the possibility of reform. One of our most important—and most humane—obligations in the Northern Territory relates to the aborigines. It is one of the worst features of Dr. Gilruth's administration that the treatment of the aborigines of the Territory has been rather a duplication of some of the worst previous experiences of Australian history, and not on the lines that modern humanity would desire, or that this House would wish to be followed.

Mr. KELLY.—That is rather a serious statement. Can the honorable gentleman state facts in support of it?

Mr. FINLAYSON.—Yes, if the honorable member will move for an extension of my time. I have piles of documents here.

Mr. LIVINGSTON.—Will the honorable member vouch for the statements contained in them?

Mr. FINLAYSON.—They are over reliable signatures. The office of Chief Inspector of Aborigines has just been abolished, and Mr. Beckett's statement is that the administration of the Territory with regard to the treatment of aborigines is not such as any member of this House can be proud of. I am certain that every member will be glad to see an alteration made in this matter. It is a duty that we owe to the aborigines.

Mr. BRENNAN (Batman) [3.32].—In adding a word or two to what the honorable member for Brisbane has said, I shall begin by referring to the matter with which he was dealing when the Standing Orders compelled him to finish his speech, that is, the treatment of the aborigines in the Northern Territory. One of the saddest things in Australian history is the fact that the aborigines of this country have been degraded and debauched by their association with civilization.

Mr. POYNTON.—The only alternative is to keep the white man out of the Northern Territory.

Mr. BRENNAN.—This state of things does not reflect much credit on our civilization. I view with the greatest regret the withdrawal of the Chief Inspector of Aborigines consequent upon the abolition of his office. Mr. Beckett was a most conscientious and able officer, whose experience of Australian aborigines is equaled by few, if any, in Australia.

Mr. POYNTON.—Did he know anything about aborigines before he went to the Territory?

Mr. BRENNAN.—Yes, a great deal. He had had a long and intimate acquaintance with them as the result of his travels and observations from the north to the south of Australia. This is a delicate matter, and if there are any within hearing whose duty does not compel them to remain while I mention what I conceive to be certain facts in connexion with the aborigines and their relations with the white men of the Territory, they should take this opportunity to retire. I wish to put it on record that it is one of the very gravest things in connexion with our responsibility to a subject race that it is stated by the Chief Inspector himself that there have been men in the employment of the Commonwealth termed protectors of aborigines who have openly carried on immoral intercourse with them.

Mr. BAMFORD.—The honorable member is making a very grave charge now.

Mr. POYNTON.—He will not make it outside.

Mr. BRENNAN.—It is a charge which may be made outside as well as inside Parliament, because the facts have been admitted by the departmental head, and are capable of conclusive proof by the Chief Inspector. It is a known fact that there are children being reared and looked after by the Northern Territory Missions, and others, who owe their shameful origin to officials paid by the Commonwealth. If honorable members wish to challenge serious statements, I will make them, and proof of them can be easily obtained. There is an acknowledged traffic of this disgraceful and disgusting character going on between a regrettably large number of white people and the blacks in the Northern Territory. It is within the knowledge of every self-respecting resident of the Territory that male blacks in and about Darwin are selling their females to white men. I would be quite prepared to support a Bill providing for the penalty of imprisonment, or such a substantial fine, for immoral intercourse of that kind, as would remove so disgraceful a stain from this country. Proof of all these statements is forthcoming if an opportunity be offered for producing it in greater detail. It can

be easily understood that, in the short time at my disposal, it is impossible to deal adequately with it.

Let me turn now to another subject. One of the Ordinances of the Northern Territory provides that no Chinese may employ aboriginals. Notwithstanding that fact, I have very strong evidence—into which I wish the Minister to make inquiries—that the Government Secretary put his signature, or, at all events, officially consented in some way, to the employment of aboriginals by Chinese. I have the very strongest evidence that, as the result of that consent, given in contravention of an Ordinance of this Parliament, four Australian blacks were employed by a Chinese on a lugger, or like vessel, and that while so employed they were drowned.

Mr. CORSER.—When was this done?

Mr. BRENNAN.—I have no time to refer to the correspondence, but it is quite recent history. I come now to another matter. We have in the Northern Territory a Supreme Court Judge—Judge Bevan—a gentleman whom I know well, and have always respected. It is on record that Judge Bevan quite openly—and apparently he believes, and would have us believe, with propriety—entered into a contract with one Mr. Hope for the purchase of a copper mine in the Northern Territory from the Government. Such an action on the part of the Judge of the Northern Territory ought to be deprecated; I certainly deprecate the highest judicial officer in the Territory entering into big commercial contracts with the Government that he is serving in a judicial capacity. In this contract there was a condition, so I am informed, that only white labour—and no Chinese—should be employed. As a matter of fact, however, Chinese labour was employed on the mine. A little later, when the matter became public, it was urged in defence of the action of the owners of the mine in employing Chinese labour, that there had been a variation of the solemn agreement entered into when the mine was sold to these gentlemen. The file was then turned up, and a short document, signed by Judge Bevan and another, was discovered. It was in the form of a letter, and that letter is also on record. I have

a photo of it, and, speaking from memory, its terms were somewhat as follows:—

Following upon our telephone conversation, I now repeat that the condition in the agreement as to the non-employment of Chinese, is to be read subject to there being a sufficiency of other labour available for that purpose.

Mr. KELLY.—Who wrote that letter?

Mr. BRENNAN.—It was written by Judge Bevan for himself and Mr. Hope, his co-purchaser of the mine. This letter, which is on the file, was repudiated by Dr. Jensen, who said, "I have never seen it before." It was not minuted by the Administrator as having been received by him, nor was it minuted by Dr. Jensen as having been received by him.

What I desire to criticise—and I think it is in this regard that Judge Bevan should be asked for an explanation—is the fact that, as the Chief Judicial Officer of the Territory, he purports to vary a most solemn agreement by a short, hastily-prepared memorandum written on a piece of notepaper, signed by himself and his co-partner in this enterprise, and placed upon the file, although no record is now available as to whether it was ever seen by the men to whom it was addressed.

Mr. KELLY.—Is there any evidence as to whether that letter reached the file quite properly, so far as the Judge is concerned?

Mr. BRENNAN.—On this point I am not absolutely certain, but my information is that it bears no minute of any kind.

Mr. KELLY.—No receipt stamp?

Mr. BRENNAN.—Neither a receipt stamp nor any other stamp, nor any other kind; but it will speak for itself.

Mr. MAXWELL.—Who was the other party to the contract?

Mr. BRENNAN.—The contract was as between Mr. Hope and Judge Bevan on the one hand, and the Government on the other. In dismissing the matter for the present, I submit that it was most improper to purport to vary such an agreement. At the root of the whole incident is the question of whether it was right to employ Chinese labour. I am viewing the matter, however, not from that stand-point, but from the point of view as to whether or not a considered agreement should be dealt with in that way by any person, and

particularly by a gentleman of the eminence and the reputation—which I am glad to acknowledge—of the Judge of the Northern Territory.

On the general question of the re-appointment of Dr. Gilruth, I think that a very reasonable protest was addressed to this House some little time back by the honorable member for Wakefield when he urged that that re-appointment might well have awaited consideration by Parliament, especially in view of the fact that Dr. Gilruth, at the time it was made, had been in Melbourne on full pay for some eight or nine months. I think it was almost an affront to this House to make a re-appointment in those circumstances and at that time, in view of the general knowledge that it would receive far from the unanimous approval of this House, and would be the subject of very grave criticism from both sides. Dr. Gilruth, however, was re-appointed, and in war time, at a salary of £1,700 a year. I deliberately assert—and I am not attempting to make any party capital out of this—that it was an affront to the people of this country to re-appoint that officer, however excellent he may be, at such a salary, and to add to it an entertainment allowance of £500 per annum.

Mr. GLYNN (Angas—Minister for Home and Territories) [3.46].—I was not in the House when the honorable member for Brisbane first raised this question, but I understand that he said that Dr. Gilruth had informed the Government that he could obtain from a chartered company, or some other body, an offer to take over the Territory. I can only say that no such offer was ever made to me or to any other member of the Government.

When I was last in office, some three years ago, I was anxious to cut down expenditure in the Northern Territory, and I then discussed with Dr. Gilruth the necessity for curtailing its increase. I also raised some questions about the position of the farms, and as to whether agriculture could profitably be carried on up there. As he rose from his chair at the end of the interview on that occasion, Dr. Gilruth remarked, "Well, would you hand over the Territory to a chartered company?" He, at all events, used words to that effect, but I shut down the matter at once, and there was no further re-

ference to it. I do not think our conversation on the matter extended over more than half a minute, and certainly the remarks as to handing over the Territory did not extend over more than a few seconds.

What led Dr. Gilruth to make such an observation I do not know, but, later on, when it reached the importance of a newspaper statement on the subject, it occurred to me that Dr. Gilruth was endeavouring to emphasize his optimism as to the future of the Territory. When I heard of this newspaper criticism, I asked Dr. Gilruth what it all meant. He then told me that he met Mr. Randolph Bedford on the occasion of a visit paid by the latter to Mr. Bamford—

Mr. FALKNER.—And Mr. Randolph Bedford is a reliable Labour journalist.

Mr. GLYNN.—Dr. Gilruth, from his occasional proximity to politicians, perhaps, was rather sensitive to criticism, and he told Mr. Bedford that he thought he had reason to complain of his continual attacks on the Territory. He disapproved of this destructive criticism, and thought that there should be, on Mr. Bedford's part, a better recognition of the difficulties in the way of the development of the Territory. That conversation led up to some statement by Dr. Gilruth to Mr. Bedford, to the effect that he had some two years previously told the then Minister for External Affairs that the Territory could be managed by a chartered company. I believe he mentioned to him that some such company as that which managed a part of the British Empire in South Africa—the Rhodesian Company—could be formed, but he assured me that he had no particular company in his mind at the time. He made no offer to me, and I placed not the slightest significance on his passing remark about the possibility. What, probably, was unconsciously in his mind was the financial position when we took over the Territory. When the Territory was taken over on the 1st January, 1911, by the Commonwealth, I had myself to go into the facts a good deal, and I also took occasion, when settling the terms of the measure, to examine the finances. I found that an offer had been made to Sir Frederick Holder, who was then Premier of South Australia, by a company, or a number of capitalists prepared to form a company, to take

over the Territory for about £10,250,000, on the condition—this is the point—that they were allowed to introduce coloured labour. At the time of the transfer the indebtedness of the Territory was about £6,000,000, including the Port Augusta railway and all other works. Further, we entered into an obligation, not yet carried out, with South Australia to continue the transcontinental line up from Oodnadatta and down from Pine Creek. To do this would have cost an additional sum, bringing up the total to about £10,250,000. The figures that have been referred to to-day principally have to do with the payment of interest and redemption from year to year. South Australia's plan was not to redeem loans as they fell due, but to add them to the debt and consolidate them. In our case we acted from a much better point of view, and when we have money it is just as well to spend it in one way than, perhaps, squander it in another. In other words, we paid off our debts as they fell due, and in one year no less than £500,000 was liquidated. When honorable members talk about the figures being increased, their statements may be qualified by the fact that when I was in office about 1914, the deficit in the annual accounts on ordinary expenditure and works—which is the test, and not the redemption fund and interest—was £202,000, and the expenditure £274,000. I reduced the expenditure to about £208,000 at one stroke, and the deficit to £135,000 during my term of office; and I can show that there has not been an increase of £60,000 since the Territory was taken over. It is the redemption that causes the trouble; and, as the honorable member for Franklin has asked for a statement on the point, I shall to-morrow, if ready, read one that has been prepared.

No offer was made to me, nor would I at any time entertain one, to barter away our obligations to any company. Only about three weeks ago a capitalist came to me in Adelaide, who was prepared to construct the transcontinental line. He asked me, "Is there any chance of any offer to construct that line being considered?" and I replied, "There is none, if you mean on such terms as were embodied in the South Australian Act."

These are the facts in regard to the offer. The honorable member has referred to a number of grievances; and in

Mr. Glynn.

this connexion I wish I could remember the words of a missionary writer in a very neat periodical called *The Inlander*, issued, I believe, by the Methodists, or one of the religious bodies, which are doing such good work amongst the blacks in Central Australia. That missionary said he regretted to have to express an opinion at all, because he was sure that there would be immediately three or four other opinions expressed to controvert his; and that is the case with the Northern Territory. The honorable member for Brisbane referred to two cases, and, apparently, the honorable member for Batman has recently been given a political brief in the matter of Mr. Beckett. It is rather significant that I should have met Mr. Beckett, and I then asked him to reduce to writing the complaints—some of the very complaints we have heard here to-day. I felt that in justice to Mr. Beckett, and those whom he impugned, the charges ought to be made in black and white, and I was expecting such a document, with a view to making inquiry. I do not wish to go into Mr. Beckett's case, or to say one word against that officer. I spent many nights going through the files of papers—which, by the way, have gone to Darwin—and with the scrutiny of a lawyer and a Minister, who ought to keep his mind unbiased, I made a complete analysis of the evidence and the judgment of the Judge, almost acting as a defender in case of any possible injustice. I made a minute on the matter, which was *sub judice* at the time, that the vacancy created in his office was not at all affected by that case. Nor do I see that Mr. Beckett, or any one else, has come badly out of it.

Mr. BRENNAN.—That is why I think he is a good witness.

Mr. GLYNN.—I have not a word to say against Mr. Beckett, but, with due respect to him, I do not think that it is quite fair, nor in accord with the finest sense of members of the House, that, when allegations are made on one side, and the Minister is waiting for definite evidence, the matter should be raised in the House. All we have as yet is Mr. Beckett's version; and, as I told him, I hoped he would not expect me to assume a thing proved against another officer, considering that I would not accept anything against him until I had heard what he had to say.

I read both sides of the correspondence. I do not believe there is very much in the statement of the aboriginal position at the present time. Unfortunately, contact with whites has to some extent a degrading effect on aboriginals, and they present a very difficult problem. I have considered the matter with Professor Spencer and others; but, do what we may, the trouble seems almost insuperable. I read the charges about the aboriginals and made inquiries; but I do not think that the House is the place in which to discuss them. Only a few cases are mentioned; and nearly always, when a man leaves office, some disputes of the kind arise.

Dr. Jensen made a series of charges, which were reduced to forty-three in number, principally against Dr. Gilruth.

Mr. BOYD.—How many charges were there at the start?

Mr. GLYNN.—I was not in office, and I do not know. I myself gave Dr. Jensen a certificate of competency as a man who had done good work in the mining branch in the Territory. It is true that Dr. Jensen did not leave his appointment when I was in office, but I thought that, in justice to him, he was entitled to the certificate. In these matters you can never get absolute accuracy, for opinions will differ. The charges made were inquired into by a Sydney magistrate, who found every one of them disproved. What is a Minister to do? Is he to listen night after night to reiterated charges? If so, how can he be expected to carry on the administration? I really do not know whether it is worth while referring to any other point. The Aboriginal Department has been presided over for a time by Professor Spencer.

Mr. KELLY.—The honorable member for Batman said that a document of a very important nature had found its way on to a public file, without any notification of how it came there.

Mr. GLYNN.—In connexion with the Judge?

Mr. KELLY.—Varying a contract which the Judge ought not to have made with the Government.

Mr. GLYNN.—I do not think there was anything in that, speaking from memory, and the impression made on me at the time; but if the honorable member will ask a formal question on the subject, which did not arise during my term of office, I shall tell him the facts from the

departmental point of view. As far as I saw at the time, there was not any justification for the attempt to throw disrepute on the Judge, for the transaction seemed to have been a *bonâ fide* one.

Mr. KELLY.—As the statement has been made it ought to be cleared up, in fairness to the Judge.

Mr. GLYNN.—I shall look up the file.

Mr. BRENNAN.—I took it for granted that the matter would be looked into. I assumed that the matter having been raised, and the fact of this document pointed out, the Minister would take the trouble to make inquiry.

Mr. GLYNN.—So far as I could see, there was no justification for imputations that were being made; it was simple repetition.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—Assuming that there was a contract, does the Minister agree that a Judge should enter into contracts?

Mr. GLYNN.—Not at all; and I made a note of the matter the moment I heard of it. I do not wish, however, without refreshing my memory, to express an opinion, but I shall be pleased to do so at some future date if honorable members wish. One of Mr. Beckett's complaints was that Mr. Carey, his chief, did not try him. Technically, I think that Mr. Beckett was right.

Mr. BRENNAN.—I had not time to go into that matter.

Mr. GLYNN.—The honorable member went into as much as he could. I do not wish to discuss the merits of the question, but simply to point out that Mr. Carey refused to sit as a Judge, because he thought he was, to some extent, affected by certain charges, and he feared that he might afterwards be said to have acted in a case to which he was a party.

Mr. FINLAYSON.—Would not Judge Bevan have been the only court of appeal?

Mr. GLYNN.—That also was one of Mr. Beckett's cases, and honorable members seem to have been very well primed up. I am not attempting to form any opinion against Mr. Beckett, who, in my view, has not suffered at all by the inquiry that took place.

Mr. BRENNAN.—It is very seldom we can get any information from the Territory, and when we do, we wish to verify it.

Mr. GLYNN.—Nearly all the information is supplied from outside, and five-sixths of it is destructive criticism. I very much regret that a little more optimism is not displayed in reference to this *damnosa hereditas* of ours. When a lease is put up for sale in the Territory in country adjoining Queensland, at a lower rental for equally good land, some fatality prevents it being taken up; and that, I suppose, is the fault of Dr. Gilruth. He may be 800 miles away, but still his second person is there all the time. An objection has been raised that Dr. Gilruth is paying too much attention to pastoral matters; but, really, the last complaint was that he was not attending to them at all. We are told, to speak colloquially, that this is a pastoral proposition altogether. I do not think it is an agricultural proposition.

Mr. SPEAKER.—The Minister's time has expired.

Dr. MALONEY (Melbourne) [4.3].—I am surprised that the Minister did not tell us that the people up in the Territory are much like helots, without votes or citizen rights. There is no Judge so dominant or powerful as the Judge at present up there; and if the recall were in operation, as in some of the States in America, he would be dragged from the Bench if they considered him unworthy.

Mr. BOYD.—There would have to be the initiative as well.

Dr. MALONEY.—Exactly; but I am sure that the honorable member, if he had to be tried in the Territory, would not like to be tried without a jury.

Mr. GLYNN.—I resisted every attempt to vary the jury system.

Dr. MALONEY.—Then I take it that the Minister agrees with me that the same jury system should operate there as in other parts of Australia?

Mr. BOYD.—Do you want to make the Territory a State?

Dr. MALONEY.—I wish to give the Australian in the Territory the same rights that he enjoys elsewhere.

Mr. BOYD.—That can only be done by giving the people there members to elect.

Dr. MALONEY.—Why should not the Territory be attached to some Federal constituency?

Mr. KELLY.—Does not the honorable member for Grey represent the Territory?

Dr. MALONEY.—The honorable member jeers while I am fighting for the

workers up there. I am presenting the case of 90 per cent. of the population; and I venture to say that if a vote of the white people were taken, Dr. Gilruth would be swept out of office.

Mr. BOYD.—There are people who always try to sweep out strong men.

Dr. MALONEY.—As a doctor of veterinary science, Dr. Gilruth possesses the highest diploma given in his profession, and I could recommend him for an opinion on stock; but there are Australians who know more about land than he does. Dr. Jensen, on the other hand, is a doctor of science, and I doubt if you could count doctors of science by the hundred where you could count doctors of veterinary science by the thousand.

I am very glad that the honorable member for Batman brought under the notice of the House the brutal treatment of the aborigines. I have never met Mr. Beckett, but the Minister seemed to suggest that an opinion given by that gentleman to Mr. Brennan should be put aside.

Mr. BRENNAN.—I was in the Northern Territory some years ago, and I have a fair knowledge of what Mr. Beckett was doing there at that time.

Mr. GLYNN.—I say nothing against him, nor does Dr. Gilruth.

Dr. MALONEY.—I know that in the treatment of those terrible diseases known as the "red plague" proper assistance was not given. I make that statement on the authority of His Grace the Bishop of Carpentaria—Dr. White. When I was on Thursday Island, I found there was the greatest difficulty in getting drugs. Although in Victoria men, women, and doctors are being penalized in fines of from £10 to £100 if they do not give proper attention to the treatment of these diseases, yet in the Territory, where the missionaries were willing to give their services free to cure suffering humanity, obstacles were thrown in their way. I can hardly say that I should like a Royal Commission appointed to investigate Northern Territory affairs, for any one conversant with the history of the Territory knows that the reports of Commissions are filed yards high. But, in God's name, what is the use of paying a man £44 per week to administer the Northern Territory and keeping him in Melbourne for nine months! Some honorable member interjected that the only industry in the Territory was pastoral. Dr. Gilruth

assured me that rice is being cultivated there, and for the first time in the history of the world is being reaped by machinery.

Mr. SAMPSON.—That is upland rice, not swamp rice.

Dr. MALONEY.—It is paddy rice. In countries where I have seen rice growing, the land is terraced, and the use of machinery is impossible. But in the Territory, owing to the climate and the quick drying of the soil, the ground is hard enough for machinery to be used. Dr. Gilruth was certain that if future experiments in rice growing proved successful, they would be able to reap it by machinery and employ white labour at white man's wages. But why does not this man, who draws a salary of £1,750 and an allowance of £500, set an example to other residents of the Territory by employing white people in his own house? It may be said that if white girls are sent to the Territory they marry. Do we not want them to marry, and rear children to populate the Territory? I urge the Minister to see that any girls who are sent to the Territory travel first class, and not in the steerage. I have been an officer on the boats trading to the Orient, and I would not put a Newfoundland dog in the steerage. It is a scandal that a man with an income of £44 per week will not employ white labour in his house.

Mr. PIGOTT.—White girls will not go into the back country.

Dr. MALONEY.—Give them a chance. It is infamous that when an Australian citizen goes to the Northern Territory he has no citizen rights as a voter. When the Territory was controlled by South Australia, residents of the Territory had the right to vote, but their franchise has been taken from them. Another urgent reform is the institution of trial by jury, and neither this Government nor any succeeding Government will be acting justly unless they give to all men and women in the Territory the right of trial by a panel of their fellow citizens.

Mr. GLYNN.—Trial by jury exists there.

Dr. MALONEY.—Only in a modified form.

Mr. GLYNN.—It has never been modified. The principle is the same, although in some States it is governed by a majority verdict and in others it is not.

Dr. MALONEY.—Is it the English system?

Mr. GLYNN.—It is the English system of trial by jury which we have never tried to alter.

Dr. MALONEY.—In answer to an honorable member who made a sneering reference to Mr. Bedford, I say that, although that gentleman has his faults, as we all have, there is no better Australian than he. He stands for Australia first and always, and after Australia for the Homeland. I will back his opinion on the Northern Territory against that of any member of the House. If the *Age* will only give its attention to the Northern Territory, the present Government may be compelled to do something for its development. Until the citizens have trial by jury, and the same right to vote as other Australians have, I shall continue to protest. When it suited the present Government, the people in the Territory, and also in Papua and the Federal Territory, were allowed to vote. I speak as one who advocated the cause against which the people of the Territory voted in connexion with the last referendum, and I say that they should be allowed the franchise on all occasions. Of the personal honesty of the Minister for Home and Territories no man has a greater opinion than I have, and even with his legal training I would trust him in every way as head of his Department. But I ask him to put aside his legal training in dealing with the demand of these people for justice.

When I am speaking on the Budget I shall show how the Territory can be kept as a meat reserve to supply the whole of the Australian people. It is the last great Territory that the Commonwealth has in its possession untrammelled by State rights. We can manage that Territory in our own way, and it is the duty of the Government to the future millions of people to reserve that vast tract of country, so that it may become the meat emporium of the Commonwealth, insuring the Australian people meat at a fair price for all time. Buffalo meat, thousands of carcasses of which have been destroyed, is appreciated by many people after their palates have become accustomed to it, and is sometimes preferred to the meat of the domestic ox, but in the past the buffalo has been killed only for its hide. Why should not that meat be preserved and sent south to help to

feed the people in times of scarcity? Next to water conservation, the Minister has to handle, in the development of the Northern Territory, the greatest Australian problem with which we are confronted.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER.—The honorable member's time has expired.

Mr. SAMPSON (Wimmera) [4.17].—I do not intend to discuss the treatment of the aborigines of the Northern Territory from the stand-point of the honorable member for Batman, but I do believe that the time is long overdue when this Parliament should take some action to found a broad policy for dealing with the natives. I have had an opportunity of visiting the Territory, and I am convinced that the treatment of the aborigines has been too long neglected. It has never been taken in hand in a way calculated to do justice to them. I believe that if the Minister were to call for special reports from his medical officers and the administrative staff in the Territory it would be possible to found without great expense a policy that would deal out greater justice to the thousands of aborigines, large numbers of whom are coming into contact with the white population to their serious detriment.

The charges made by the Honorable member for Brisbane against the Administrator are chiefly founded on statements by Dr. Jensen, who was at one time an official in the Territory, and by Mr. Randolph Bedford. My observation, when I was in the Territory, was that a big contest is in progress between Mr. Nelson, the head of the labour organizations at Darwin, and Dr. Gilruth, and, as the leader of the labour organizations has a majority of people behind him, necessarily he can make things very hot for the Administrator. I do not wish to defend all Dr. Gilruth's acts of administration. Like every human being, he has made mistakes, but the failure of the Northern Territory so far has been very largely due to this Parliament. An Administrator was sent to the Territory to face difficulties that no human individual could overcome, and he has been left without any proper direction from the National Parliament in regard to a continuous policy. Since the Territory has been taken over by the Commonwealth, there has been only one Minister who has made anything like a real attempt to outline a policy for it,

and that is the Minister who is now controlling it. He has introduced some good development work. He has put down bores in the interior, thus providing water supplies which help the pastoral industry; and his agreement with Vestey Brothers is the only really substantial development work that has been carried out with a view to increasing the population, as well as the productivity of that northern country. In fact, these are the only two pieces of work that can be claimed by this Parliament as having anything of a permanent nature about them, or as dealing in a comprehensive way with the development of the Northern Territory.

Mr. FINLAYSON.—It is only fair to say that the agreement with Vestey Brothers was the development of a proposal put forward by a Labour Government.

Mr. SAMPSON.—I do not say that the completion of the agreement was the matter of an hour or a day. I do not intend to go into the history of the transaction. I merely say that the completion of the agreement, which had been developing for some time, was achieved under the direction of the present Minister.

The failure of the Commonwealth Parliament in regard to the Northern Territory lies in the fact that, during the period when taxation was being imposed, and our revenue was largely increasing, and we had millions to spend, we did not lay down a strong, broad, comprehensive policy of development covering a period of ten, or even twenty, years, and meaning an expenditure of, perhaps, £20,000,000. If that had been done, the Administrator, when he arrived in the Northern Territory, would have known exactly what he had to do. He would have been charged with the specific task of carrying out the Government policy.

The honorable member for Brisbane has quoted Dr. Jensen. The Minister has already pointed out that, so far as his indictment of Dr. Gilruth was concerned, Dr. Jensen left the Northern Territory a discredited man, whose charges had been found by a judicial tribunal to be utterly groundless. The honorable member should not have quoted Dr. Jensen unless he was able to back up, by indisputable evidence in other directions,

the statements of one whose charges had been tried and found wanting by a judicial tribunal.

Mr. FINLAYSON.—Does the honorable member suggest that the inquiry held into Dr. Jensen's charges was a satisfactory tribunal?

Mr. SAMPSON.—The honorable member could ask for nothing more conclusive than the fact that the forty-five charges brought by Dr. Jensen against the Administrator of the Northern Territory were tried before a police magistrate sent from Sydney for the purpose, and every one of them failed. Dr. Jensen was certainly put "out of court" as an indictor of the Administrator.

But the honorable member for Brisbane was on sound ground when he indicated the existence of divided control. In this great Northern Territory, several thousands of miles away from the Commonwealth Seat of Government, there are all sorts of different authorities in conflict. The Post Office is ruled from one branch, the railways are under another control, the Land Titles Office is under another control, and, on top of all, the Administrator is supposed to exercise a general supervision over the Territory. All this division of control necessarily means conflict and warfare, and it has been brought about by the failure of the Commonwealth Government to place some individual or body of men in control of the Territory. I do not care whether the control is exercised by an Administrator, or whether some body which is partly elected and partly nominee exercises control, or whether some Commission is appointed. Whatever authority be constituted, it should have vested in it general supervision over the whole of the Public Service in the Territory.

Mr. WEBSTER.—I offered to hand over the postal work.

Mr. SAMPSON.—Something of the sort should be done. I do not say that Dr. Gilruth has not made mistakes. No individual could go into that Territory under the industrial conditions obtaining there during the last four or five years and please all the people with whom he had to come into contact. In fact, as was remarked from these benches a little while ago, a strong man must necessarily come into conflict with the industrial

organizations in the Northern Territory. Here is an example of what the industrial conditions obtaining there have meant. The estimated cost of building the meat works was £250,000, and when allowance was made for certain increases of material because of the outbreak of the war, the estimate was increased to £300,000, but it is well to know that before the works are completed the cost will considerably exceed £500,000.

Mr. GLYNN.—The cost will probably be £750,000.

Mr. SAMPSON.—I do not say that labour troubles have been responsible for the whole of the increased cost of these works, but I know that one season has already been lost owing to them, and that they have increased the expenditure to an enormous extent. I do not say that every workman in the Territory is prepared to go out on strike, or is not prepared to do his duty; but I know that the industrial organizations there have had the same kind of leadership as has been in evidence in the southern parts of the Commonwealth, with results well known to the community in the shape of industrial loss to Australia as a whole, as well as loss of wages and comforts to the workers themselves. I know that it is impossible for the Minister to lay before this House anything like a broad, comprehensive policy, owing to the heavy expenditure incurred by the war, but I hope that it will be possible for him to give special attention to the matter of dealing with the aborigines. I hope that he will obtain reports from his officers, and see whether some improvement in that branch of the administration cannot be carried out without any further delay.

Question resolved in the negative.

WOOL TOPS.

Mr. HIGGS asked the Prime Minister, *upon notice*—

Whether he will give the following information:—

1. The names of the shareholders of, and the number of shares held by each on the 1st March, 1917, in the Colonial Combing and Weaving Company Limited, of 62 Pitt-street, Sydney, with which the Government has entered into an arrangement to share in the profits accruing from the export of wool tops.
2. The names of persons for whom shares are held in trust.
3. The names of the directors of the company.
4. The amount of the paid-up capital of the company.

5. The date of the formation of the company and the purpose for which it was formed.

6. Similar information concerning Whiddon Bros. Limited, Relby-lane, Sydney, and the Colonial Wholesale Meat Company Limited, 62 Pitt-street, Sydney.?

Mr. HUGHES.—The information is not available. The companies are registered under the Companies Act of New South Wales, and the list of shareholders, directors, &c., may be inspected under the provisions of the Act.

BUREAU OF SCIENCE.

Mr. SAMPSON asked the Prime Minister, *upon notice*—

In view of the present necessity for the exercise of national economy, will the Prime Minister give the House an assurance that the appointments of highly salaried directors and staff of the proposed Bureau of Science will be deferred until such time as the House has had opportunity to discuss the Government's proposals as to the scope of the activity of the bureau, its cost for establishment and upkeep, and the possibility, or otherwise, of its being of practical value to the nation commensurate with the expenditure?

Mr. HUGHES.—The whole question can be discussed on the Estimates. Nothing will be done before such an opportunity is afforded to honorable members.

COST OF LITHGOW RIFLES.

Mr. GREGORY asked the Minister representing the Minister for Defence, *upon notice*—

1. Will the Minister ask the Joint Committee of Public Accounts, when appointed, to inquire into and report upon, the cost of rifles, &c., made at the Lithgow Small Arms Factory, and matters incidental thereto?

2. Will the Government proceed at once with the appointment of this Committee?

Mr. GROOM.—The answers to the honorable member's questions are as follows:—

1. The Joint Committee of Public Accounts has already reported upon the Small Arms Factory. The Royal Commission of Navy and Defence Administration, associated with which are expert accountants, is at present investigating the accounts of the Government factories, and it is suggested that the question might stand over until their report is received.

2. This is being referred to the Prime Minister.

FOOD IN COLD STORAGE.

Mr. SAMPSON asked the Prime Minister, *upon notice*—

Will he state the total area of cold storage space within the respective States of Australia,

and the amount of such space occupied by—
(1) Beef; (2) mutton and lamb; (3) butter, cheese, and poultry; (4) rabbits; (5) the total amount of space still available for storage of perishable products?

Mr. HUGHES.—The information is not available. I shall endeavour to obtain it for the honorable member.

TRADE CATALOGUES.

Mr. KELLY asked the Minister for Trade and Customs, *upon notice*—

1. Is it a fact that his Department makes a practice of examining the home trade catalogues of British manufacturers, and, in cases where prices for individual orders given therein exceed those quoted to Australian agents doing a large and exclusive business in such goods, loading the invoices to the said agents?

2. In what countries other than the United Kingdom does his Department maintain agents to make similar inquiries?

3. In the case of imports from countries of origin not similarly scrutinized for the above purpose, what explanation does his Department offer for destroying by administrative methods the preference enacted by law for imports from the United Kingdom?

Mr. JENSEN.—The answers to the honorable member's questions are as follows:—

1. The implication in this question is that the Department disregards the usual commercial practice of charging lower net prices to buyers of large quantities. That is not the case.

2. In the United States of America, officers stationed in the United Kingdom also visit Continental countries.

3. The action of the Department is strictly in accordance with the law. If the honorable member knows of any individual case in which the importer appears to be deprived of any benefit the law allows him, I shall be glad to cause full investigation.

PREFERENCE TO RETURNED SOLDIERS.

Mr. SAMPSON asked the Treasurer, *upon notice*—

Whether he regards the following letter as one which should have been sent by a public institution to a soldier who has fought for his country and returned with an honorable discharge to Australia. The letter, which was received from the manager of the Commonwealth Bank in one of the Australian capitals, reads—

"Referring to your letter of 22nd instant (June), applying for a position in the service of this bank, I regret to inform you that we have none to offer you."

2. Does the law governing the management of the Commonwealth Bank preclude the intervention of the Treasurer in respect to the carrying out of the Government policy of preference to returned soldiers within that institution?

3. If so, will the Treasurer be good enough to forward this question to the Governor of the Commonwealth Bank, with a request for a reply?

Sir JOHN FORREST.—The answers to the honorable member's questions are as follow:—

1 and 2. The Treasurer does not control the Commonwealth Bank.

3. Yes.

PROHIBITION OF ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION.

Mr. FINLAYSON asked the Prime Minister, *upon notice*—

1. Whether the following message from the Health Congress, which recently met in Sydney, has reached him:—"Owing to the grave emergency, the Health Congress to-night unanimously and enthusiastically passed a resolution urging you, under the War Precautions Act, to proclaim the prohibition of alcohol immediately, for the duration of the war and demobilization, and affirming that alcohol is a great hindrance to recruiting, also urging you to cable to the Prime Minister of England to protect our soldiers from alcohol."?

2. What action, if any, does the Prime Minister propose to take in response to this request?

Mr. HUGHES.—The answers to the honorable member's questions are as follow:—

1. Yes.

3. The matter is receiving consideration.

DAYLIGHT SAVING REPEAL BILL.

Bill received from the Senate, and (on motion by Mr. GROOM) read a first time.

CONCILIATION AND ARBITRATION BILL.

Motion (by Mr. GROOM for Mr. Hughes) agreed to—

That leave be given to bring in a Bill for an Act to amend the Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Act 1904-1915.

PUBLIC SERVICE BILL 1917.

SECOND READING.

Debate resumed from 25th July (*vide* page 466), on motion by Mr. HUGHES—

That this Bill be now read a second time.

Mr. GROOM (Darling Downs—Honorary Minister) [4.34].—I wish to make one or two observations with regard to criticisms that have been levelled against the Bill. By section 26A of the Act, which was assented to on the 13th September, 1915, it was provided that preference

should be given in appointments to members of the Expeditionary Forces. The paragraph reads as follows:—

In the making of appointments to the Public Service from among persons who have successfully passed the prescribed examination, preference shall be given to those persons who have served with satisfactory record in any Expeditionary Force raised under the provisions of the Defence Act 1903-1915.

During the debate objection has been taken to the Bill on the ground that it deals only with the Clerical Division of the Public Service. The Bill refers particularly to that division because it is necessary to provide for preference in regard to it. But the measure must be read in conjunction with the existing legislation. There is at present no limit to the age at which persons may enter the Professional Division of the Public Service, and any person may enter the General Division whose age on his last birthday was not less than sixteen nor more than fifty. Therefore it is not necessary to mention the Professional and General Divisions in the Bill.

Mr. TUDOR.—I understand that at present any person not more than fifty years of age can enter the General Division, and that, under certain circumstances, a person not more than fifty-five years of age may be allowed to enter that division, but that no person over twenty-five years of age can get into the Clerical Division.

Mr. GROOM.—That is so, and we have therefore extended the age limit applicable to the Clerical Division to provide for preference to returned soldiers. It has been questioned whether Army nurses will be able to take advantage of the proposed preference. Consideration was given to that matter before it was mentioned in the debate, and an instruction was issued for the preparation of an amendment which would make it clear that nurses may take advantage of the proposed preference. Then, again, the Bill refers only to the Expeditionary Force raised under the Defence Act, and we therefore propose to move an amendment which will make it clear that the men serving in the Navy, who are entitled to as much consideration as those serving on land, shall be treated in the same way.

Mr. GREGORY.—Is the Government going to continue the preference to members of disloyal unions?

Mr. MATHEWS.—Suppose returned soldiers belong to disloyal unions, will they be given preference?

Mr. GROOM.—I am, possibly, prevented by the Order of Leave from referring to those matters. We shall do better to keep to the problem with which we have now to deal. I shall have circulated the amendments to which I have referred, so that honorable members may see how far they carry out the expressed intention of the Government. I have no desire to discuss the general question of temporary employment which has been raised during the debate. I think it will be acknowledged that the amendments will give effect to the intentions of the Government, and the desire of the House to provide effective preference for returned soldiers and sailors.

Mr. ATKINSON (Wilmot) [4.42].—I am sure that the measure meets with the approval of every member of the House. Our soldiers have been prepared to sacrifice everything for the country, and we should do what we can to show our gratitude for this sacrifice. Unfortunately, it is beyond human possibility to fully repay them. At the same time, we must guard against any action which may be to the detriment of the public interest. I was called out of the chamber during the Minister's explanation, and therefore I ask him whether the Bill limits the preference that is to be given to the Clerical Division of the Service?

Mr. GROOM.—I have explained that no legislative action is necessary to provide for preference in regard to the Professional and General Divisions.

Mr. ATKINSON.—My desire is that there shall be preference in regard to all the divisions of the Service. As to clause 3, it seems to me that without an amendment, it may do some harm to the public interest. I am sure that no returned soldier wishes to be taken on as a casual employee, and retained permanently, but as the clause stands, soldiers temporarily employed may become virtually permanent employees. At the present time, temporary employees are appointed for six months, when they are supposed to make room for others, and at the Public Service Commissioner's office there are long lists of the names of those waiting for such employment. But returned soldiers appointed as temporary employees will not be affected by any limitation of

time, and this may work public injury. It may happen that some thousands of temporary employees will be replaced with returned soldiers, who, instead of being kept on merely for six months, may be retained much longer, to the detriment of the public interest.

Mr. LAIRD SMITH.—Why should they not be retained so long as they do their work capably?

Mr. ATKINSON.—There may not be the work for them to do.

Mr. WEBSTER.—The honorable member is afraid that the clause may tend to cause congestion of the Public Service.

Mr. ATKINSON.—Yes. After a few years, custom will obtain its usual power, and the longer these men are in the Service the harder it will be to get rid of them.

Mr. WEBSTER.—The honorable member suggests that they will become virtually permanent employees.

Mr. ATKINSON.—Yes; though not in the sense in which those who obtain positions in the Service by passing examinations are permanent. I wish to know if the Government is prepared to move an amendment to prevent this.

Mr. TUDOR.—Has the honorable member in mind the fact that married men with families, who have volunteered, are being turned out of the Service to give preference to returned soldiers?

Mr. ATKINSON.—I was not alluding to that matter. No doubt there will be hard cases, but as it is the policy of the Government to give preference to returned men, every effort should be made to remove single men before married men when displacements are necessary to find positions for returned men. This has not always been done. I do not blame the Minister or those in high authority for what has occurred; it is generally the result of the stupidity of some lower placed official who has carried out his instructions in a thick-headed way. I am satisfied that some public servants—some of the men in the Defence Department more particularly—are responsible for much of the trouble and friction, of which we hear so much in this House. I believe that the failure of a public servant to carry out the instructions of his superior officer is among the occurrences that are detrimental to recruiting.

I wish to know whether the Minister is prepared to bring forward a proposition so to limit the effect of clause 3 that the

men coming under it will not necessarily be made permanent officers of the Service indefinitely. While it is reasonable to provide that returned soldiers who obtain temporary employment shall not be affected by the existing time limit, we should, at the same time, make it clear that because of that fact they are not to expect permanent employment.

Mr. TUDOR.—That is what is proposed in the clause as it stands, and the first men to return will obtain the positions.

Mr. ATKINSON.—That would be unfair. If a returned soldier obtains temporary employment in the Public Service he should be prepared at the end of twelve or eighteen months to make way for another returned soldier.

Mr. TUDOR.—Has the honorable member ever come across a man who would be prepared to do that?

Mr. ATKINSON. — I have not, and that is the danger I see in clause 3. After these men have remained in the temporary employment of the Commonwealth for two or three years, it will be much harder to remove them than it would be if at the end of eighteen months' service they were called upon to make room for other returned soldiers. Under the Act as it stands, a man can be employed in the temporary service of the Commonwealth for only six months at a time. At the expiration of that period, however, his employment may be renewed for a further term, and we know that in many cases the period of service is extended. The officers responsible for such extensions cannot be blamed, because these temporary employees have become accustomed to the work required of them, and with the entrance of a new set of employees the work of training has to be commenced once more. I hope that the Minister will endeavour to limit clause 3 in some reasonable way.

Mr. LECKIE.—The Bill does not provide that a man shall be kept in the Service unless his services are required.

Mr. ATKINSON.—Quite so, but the limitation of temporary employment is removed in the case of returned soldiers, and the longer they remain in the Service the harder it will be to remove them when there is no work for them to do.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee:

Clause 1 agreed to.

Clause 2—

Section thirty-two of the principal Act is amended by adding at the end of sub-section (1.) thereof the following proviso:—

“Provided that any person who has served with satisfactory record in any Expeditionary Force raised under the provisions of the Defence Act 1903-1915, and whose age at his last birthday previous to appointment was not more than fifty years, may be appointed to the Clerical Division upon passing the prescribed examination.”

Mr. GROOM (Darling Downs—Honorary Minister) [4.55]. — I propose so to amend the Bill as to enable a special examination to be held in the case of returned soldiers, and to make it perfectly clear that it need not necessarily be such an examination as is prescribed, for instance, in the case of youths of eighteen, fresh from school, seeking to enter the Public Service. I move—

The after the word “years,” line 9, the words “and who has passed, whether before or after the commencement of this proviso, the prescribed examination” be inserted.

The clause, as proposed to be amended, will enable returned soldiers up to fifty years of age to submit to an examination to be prescribed.

Mr. PAGE.—How will this affect a man who, after passing the necessary examination, has joined the Public Service, but later on has left it altogether, and has joined the Australian Imperial Force?

Mr. GROOM.—I am having a clause drafted to the effect that where a person has previously passed an examination for admission to the Public Service, such examination shall be taken as the equivalent of the “prescribed examination.”

Mr. TUDOR (Yarra) [4.57].—I should like to have from the Minister some information as to the character of the examination which it is proposed to prescribe. A few weeks after the outbreak of war, an examination was held for linemen, or instrument fitters, in the Electrical Branch of the Postmaster-General's Department. The Fisher Government, which was then in power, realizing that men who volunteered after passing that examination would be placed at a disadvantage, decided that no permanent appointments should be made during the war. I understand that with some exceptions that decision has been rigidly adhered to.

Mr. WEBSTER.—It has practically been carried out.

Mr. TUDOR.—I know of some men who passed that examination three years ago.

Mr. GROOM.—Men outside the Australian Imperial Force?

Mr. TUDOR.—Yes; and their right to appointment to the Service still remains. Some of these men are too old to enlist, and I wish to know whether their chance of entering the Service will be prejudiced by this Bill.

Mr. LAIRD SMITH.—Does the honorable member know of any of these men who are over 45 years of age?

Mr. TUDOR.—Yes. The examination to which I refer was open to men under the age of forty-five years. I know of one man who was well over forty when he passed it. He came out very high in the list. He had been a temporary employee and made a special effort to qualify. He is now anxious to know whether the fact that he is forty-five years of age will prevent him at this stage from entering the permanent Service of the Department.

I should like now to put before the Minister, as I did on the motion for the second reading of the Bill, the position of married men with families who volunteered for active service but were rejected, and who are in the temporary employment of the Commonwealth. I urge that such men should not be turned adrift, before their six months of service has expired, in order to make room for single men. I yield to no one in my desire that justice shall be done to those who have gone to the Front to fight for our country. But I do not think that these married men—and some of them to my knowledge have as many as three, five, and six children—should be turned adrift until at least their six months of service has expired, even to make room for a returned soldier who is unmarried. I am not asking for any extension of the period of six months in respect of which a temporary servant may be employed.

Mr. GROOM.—The honorable member merely says that if there is work for these married men to do they should have an absolute right to remain in the Service until their six months' has expired.

Mr. TUDOR.—Yes. If there is no work for them to do, then I do not suggest that they should be kept on. We know that in some Departments temporary hands are sometimes employed for only three days at a time. For instance, when steamers come down to Sydney or Melbourne from the East,

temporary watchmen are employed by the Customs Department, and the Department takes care to select men on whom it can absolutely rely. These watchmen are employed for only two or three days at a time. Then again, in the Postal Department, there are temporary letter-carriers employed in Melbourne and suburbs to fill the places of men who are away at the Front. I introduced a deputation to the Postmaster-General some little time ago in regard to their position. Some of these temporary hands are married men who have been rejected, and my contention is that if there is work for them to do they should be kept on for six months.

Mr. GROOM.—In other words, that these married men shall have preference over a returned single soldier?

Mr. TUDOR.—Yes. Provided there is work for them to do, they should not be dismissed before their six months' term has expired merely because they were not accepted for service with the Australian Imperial Force. I do not know how many of these men there are, but they cannot be very numerous; and, in view of the greater difficulty there is now in obtaining employment, some consideration should be extended to them. If an unmarried soldier returns, he finds his pension doubled if he marries.

Mr. WEBSTER.—There are many soldiers at the Front who would like to get married.

Mr. TUDOR.—I believe that there are some soldiers in Europe who are marrying there, much against the wish of their friends, including many young ladies in Australia.

Mr. GROOM (Darling Downs—Honorary Minister) [5.7].—According to section 12 of the Act passed in 1915, those who were eligible for appointment when that Act came into force continue to be eligible until nine months after the termination of the present war, whether they go to the Front or not. Instructions were given that no permanent appointments should be made while the men were at the Front; but, in view of the fact that a number of youths and young men, who have gone to expense in preparing themselves for examination and qualification, would have found their labours wasted if the war continued, say, for eighteen months, that section was passed. As to the nature of the examination for the returned soldiers, I am afraid that will

have to be left to the discretion of the Commissioner; and we shall propose a clause to empower him to have a special examination.

Mr. TUDOR.—I presume it will not be as difficult as the ordinary examination.

Mr. GROOM.—It will be an examination to show the qualification of the candidate for the position for which he may be appointed, and will be more adapted to men advanced in years than is usually the case at Public Service examinations.

Mr. TUDOR.—The examination ought to be, as far as possible, more practical, and less educational, than at present.

Mr. GROOM.—That is a matter which must be left to the discretion of the Minister, keeping in view the fact that a candidate is to be appointed to perform certain duties. The third point raised by the honorable member for Yarra goes to the very root of the Bill, and raises the question—should returned men have preference or not? The general principle of the Bill gives preference, and the honorable member agrees as to the principle, but suggests a limitation. He says that if a man is married, has a wife or family, and has offered himself for the Army and been rejected, he shall not be dismissed from his temporary position in preference to the returned soldiers until the period of six months has expired. That, I say, is not necessary to provide in the Bill, for it is action which may, or may not, be taken in administration.

Mr. PAGE.—The Public Service Commissioner will be guided entirely by the Act.

Mr. GROOM.—The permanent public servants at the present moment could not be replaced by returned soldiers, except as vacancies occur, and as to temporary employees, they are dealt with, not in this clause, but in clause 3.

Mr. PAGE.—What more can a man, with a wife and family, do than volunteer?

Mr. GROOM.—It is a matter of administration. The Bill does not say that such a man shall be dismissed.

Mr. PAGE.—But such men are being dismissed.

Mr. GROOM.—I repeat that it is a matter of administration, and not legislation. The Act of 1915 gives preference, and this Bill carries out the principle by giving returned soldiers an opportunity of becoming eligible for appointment.

Mr. FINLAYSON.—I have given notice of an amendment to do away with the medical examination of returned soldiers before their admission to the Public Service.

Mr. GROOM.—The honorable member has raised one or two points to which I should like to refer. The desire of the Prime Minister was to extend the Act to nurses, and in any measures passed we have found it advisable to specifically mention them; a clause has been drafted for this Bill to carry out that intention. As to the medical examination, the honorable member appears to be afraid that such an examination as is at present insisted on would practically exclude wounded and injured men. I remind the honorable member, however, that a regulation has been drawn up providing that a candidate may be appointed though not free from physical defects, provided it is certified by a proper medical officer that he is free from such defects as would incapacitate him from the efficient discharge of the duties of the position for which he is nominated.

Mr. FINLAYSON (Brisbane) [5.19].—In view of the fact that the Government have prepared a clause to specifically include nurses, and that a further amendment is to be made giving the Public Service Commissioner power to institute a special examination for returned soldiers, it will not be necessary for me to proceed with the amendments of which I have given notice on these two points.

Amendment agreed to.

Amendment (by Mr. GROOM) agreed to—

That the words "upon passing the prescribed examination" be omitted.

Clause, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 3—

Section 40 of the principal Act is amended by inserting after sub-section (4) the following sub-section:—

"(4A) The provisions of this section which limit the time for which a person may be temporarily employed in the Public Service shall not apply in the case of a person who has served with satisfactory record in any Expeditionary Force raised under the provisions of the Defence Act 1903-1915."

Mr. FENTON (Maribyrnong) [5.21].—The Minister has already intimated that hard cases, other than those of returned soldiers, will be dealt with as a

matter of administration; but I feel that we should have a definite assurance from the Minister, or a specific provision in the Bill. If we are not careful, we shall inflict serious hardships on very deserving men who have made a *bonâ fide* attempt to go to the Front, but, owing to physical defects, have been rejected. Some of those men are responsible for the upkeep of a family, and a man in that position stands on almost identically the same plane as a single man who has been to the Front, and has not the same family responsibilities. I have here a letter written by a returned soldier who was one of the first to land at Gallipoli. He is a reputable citizen, upon whose word I can thoroughly rely, and he writes as follows on behalf of another man:—

A man who for the past two years has been employed as a temporary letter-carrier has just enlisted (after trying to do so three times), and has been accepted. It has been said that the idea of economic conscription is all "bunkum." This man, as I say, has for over two years been temporary letter-carrier, and who, the officers would report, was an exceptionally good man. Though he had volunteered and had been rejected twice, he was informed that his services would be dispensed with, and he finished up last week. The reason was that he had to make room for a returned soldier. Since then he has volunteered for the third time and been accepted. If that is not a "fight or starve" policy, I don't know what is.

That letter shows that it is possible, under a Bill of this kind, to do a grave injustice.

AN HONORABLE MEMBER.—Is the man referred to married?

MR. FENTON.—I do not say that he is. But I do not agree with those who argue that, because a man is single, he has no domestic responsibilities. Every honorable member knows that there are some single men who have a greater load of responsibility for the upkeep of a home than have many married men. Sometimes the eldest son of a family, the father of which has died, has to maintain his mother and four or five younger children. Their feeding, clothing, and housing are dependent on his earnings; and, in passing, I should like to express the hope that the Government, in framing their taxation proposals, will see that some discretion is allowed in dealing with cases of this kind.

MR. HEITMANN.—The support of the family would not be interfered with in

the case you mentioned, because a letter-carrier could earn as much at the war as in carrying letters.

MR. FENTON.—That man was turned out of the service to make room for a returned soldier. He is now in Camp; but, in recent times, men in Camp have been found, on final medical examination, to be unfitted to go to the Front; and it would not surprise me if this man, having been twice reported unfit, is finally rejected. I trust that any man who is contributing to the support of a family, and taking the part of a father as head of the household, especially when he has been rejected for active service, will not be called upon to give place to an unmarried returned soldier.

MR. FLEMING.—Whether he has volunteered or not, provided he is supporting a family.

MR. FENTON.—I agree with the honorable member. In this fair land of Australia, life is a battle for thousands of people all the time, even when no war is in progress, and we need to be careful that, in passing ameliorative legislation for returned soldiers, we do not do a distinct harm to men who are acting as gallantly, and playing their part as citizens almost as well as men who are fighting at the Front. I hope we shall have the assurance of the Minister that, although this Bill is passed to open wide the door for the entrance of returned men to the Public Service, we shall not do a grave injustice to other deserving men in the community.

MR. GROOM.—If the man you mention had been in the Service as a temporary hand for over nine months, he was liable to be dismissed at any time.

MR. HEITMANN.—That is a stupid regulation.

MR. FENTON.—I say so too.

MR. LAIRD SMITH.—But, according to the Act, he would have to go sooner or later.

MR. FENTON.—I admit that; but, in the last resort, the man was discharged to make room for a returned soldier. That is done under existing circumstances, and when we are operating a law which gives still larger powers to act in that way, a number of injustices will be committed. We should safeguard ourselves against that possibility, even to the extent of inserting a specific clause, so

that those administering the Act will clearly understand the intention of Parliament. I would prefer the insertion of a clause that will insure a square deal all round.

Mr. LAIRD SMITH (Denison) [5.30].—This clause brings under notice one of the most important sections in the Public Service Act. In my opinion, the increased cost of running the various Departments is largely caused by that section. For many years I was employed in the electrical branch of the Telegraph Department, and I had experience of the inequitable working of the section relating to temporary employment. We would train a man for six months, three of which would be occupied in getting him to understand the technical names of the instruments he was operating. Just when he was well trained, and fit to be sent to do work alone, he would be dismissed, because the Act did not permit him to remain in the Service longer than nine months. To overcome the Act, we had to discharge men for a few days, and then re-employ them. I cannot understand why we have so many casual employees in the Public Services of Australia. Is not the Commonwealth to grow, and population to increase? The greater our population, the greater number of civil servants there must be. There are in the mechanical branch of the Postal Department many temporary employees who should be in the permanent Service.

Mr. HEITMANN.—The greatest trouble in the Australian Public Service is that there are too many permanent officers.

Mr. LAIRD SMITH.—I do not agree with the honorable member. The officers in charge have an excellent opportunity of learning the capabilities of casual hands, and if those casual hands are able to pass a certain examination, they should be passed into the permanent Service. Hundreds of electricians—and men of other occupations—throughout Australia are merely casual employees, although they have been trained at great cost to the Department. How can foremen be expected to maintain the efficiency of the Service if they are continually training new men? No private firm would operate such a system. We have engineers in charge of the technical branches of the Service, but we refuse to give them a permanent staff. Every day

changes are taking place in electrical science, and only in the Service can men receive proper training. Within the last few days we have had demonstrated clearly the advantage of having men trained in the Service from their youth upwards to take responsible positions. Men who are said to have great capabilities have made statements which no trained civil servant would dream of making, because he has been trained on certain lines. These men must be trained if they are to be competent. Otherwise no Minister could run his Department. I am wondering where we are to get our future heads of Department if this policy of the continuous dismissal of men and the appointing of women proceeds. I do not object to women being employed, but we must have regard to the fact that we must have men to assume the responsible positions that are now being filled by heads of Departments. We have heads of Departments who are responsible for the expenditure of millions of pounds every year, and who are doing invaluable service, and we must train others to take their positions later on.

Mr. HEITMANN.—Do not forget that the same remarks apply to private employment.

Mr. LAIRD SMITH.—They do; but private concerns are more careful of their servants, and do not pass them out. Unless a civil servant has very great capabilities, he cannot go out at the age of forty or forty-five years and take up positions in competition with men who have been trained outside the service. That is why we should see that the service is properly manned by men who know that their positions are permanent provided they serve the country faithfully and well. It will pay the Commonwealth to employ men permanently instead of temporarily. If any one is entitled to a place in the Public Service it is the man who has gone away to fight our battles, and to whom we owe our existence to-day. Not only is he fighting for our very existence; he is also demonstrating to the Old World, which never knew it before, that the Australian is capable. His wonderful initiative has been a surprise to the Old World. An American authority said quite recently that the day had gone for the specially-trained officer to lead, and that every soldier now must have initiative. The

Australian soldier has that initiative, and as a result he is a much more capable man. When the gold-fields in Western Australia broke out, and the postal service was paralyzed, men were imported from Victoria and South Australia, and from Great Britain; but whereas the telegraph operators drawn from the southern States could do their forty words a minute on the quadruplex line men from Great Britain could not work up to that standard.

Mr. HEITMANN.—One of the best telegraph operators in Western Australia was imported from Great Britain.

Mr. LAIRD SMITH.—He was an exception. I know what I am talking about. In the damp climate of Great Britain the lines are much slower. In Australia men who are sound readers and splendid penmen can work for hours on the quadruplex instrument, doing their forty words a minute. It is due entirely to the training they receive, and that is why I wish to see this class of men retained in the service. It is a hardship for them to be only temporarily employed. We should not encourage men to enter the service for six months, and then compel them to leave and look for some other work. Men should be encouraged to apply themselves to their work in the knowledge that they will have a permanency of occupation.

There is nothing to be afraid of in the clause before the Committee provided we have the assurance of the Minister that nothing will be done resembling what was done in the Department of Home and Territories when the father of a number of children was dismissed to make room for a returned soldier. I interested myself in the case of that man, as I am of opinion that he should not have been dismissed.

Mr. TUDOR.—I understand that he has not yet been returned to the Service.

Mr. LAIRD SMITH.—I was under the impression that something had been done for him. He should not have been put off. If nothing has been done, the sooner something is done, the better it will be for the service and for all concerned. Some provision must be made for returned soldiers to enter the Commonwealth service, where they can earn their living, and do good work.

Mr. GROOM (Darling Downs—Honorary Minister) [5.42].—The clause really deals with returned soldiers, but a wider discussion, which is not strictly relevant, but to which I do not raise objection, seeing that it gives an opportunity of ventilating a certain matter, has taken place in regard to the whole question of temporary employment. The intention of the Public Service Act was to have permanent employment in the professional, clerical, and general divisions under certain clearly defined conditions, but it was realised that it was possible that certain classes might be employed who, strictly speaking, might not come under the regular machinery of the Act, and therefore power was given to declare certain men to be "exempt officers." There are many men working under the Act who are known as exempt officers. It was also realized that on specific occasions men showing certain adaptability and skill might be employed. Power was given to exempt those men. Then it was realized that a Department might find occasion to employ from time to time a number of casual men on temporary employment only. At the time the Act was passed, this was regarded as a general class of work, for which no particular qualification or skill was required, and as there were many persons in the community who would be anxious to get this work, Parliament insisted that it should be divided up by stipulating that persons employed in this way should not serve for more than six months. It was also provided that the period could be extended for three months on a special report from the head of the Department, in which a casual hand was employed, being supplied. It was never intended that that class of temporary employment should be engaged upon any particular kind of work the Commonwealth required for its service. If any mistake has been made it has been that there has been too much tendency to rely on temporary employment in cases where permanent hands should have been employed. The Public Service Commissioner may have erred on the side of trying to prevent the undue swelling of the Commonwealth Public Service, which in bad times might necessitate severe retrenchment. In this clause we are dealing with that class of temporary work which does not require skill. Returned soldiers are already being given preference for temporary employment, and the

object of the amendment is to enable him to be retained in such employment for a longer period than six months.

Mr. CONSIDINE.—Will any person temporarily employed not be dispensed with until he has served for six months?

Mr. GROOM.—A temporary employee may be dismissed at any moment. Honorable members are desirous of giving preference to returned soldiers, and are of opinion that the limitation of six months for temporary employment should not extend to them; but, it is said, do not summarily dismiss existing temporary employees such as have been mentioned—one case was that of a man with five or six children, who had volunteered several times and had been rejected, and another case was that of a father well up in years with several sons at the Front—in order to find positions for returned soldiers. I recognise that cases such as have been mentioned are fit subjects for consideration, but this is a matter not for legislation, but for administration. The right to dismiss must remain with the Minister or the permanent head.

Mr. CONSIDINE.—Will the Minister say that men shall not be dismissed merely to create vacancies?

Mr. GROOM.—Each of such cases as those specified will be considered on its merits, and I do not think that injustice will be done in cases such as have been cited.

Mr. FENTON.—Will the heads of departments accept the Minister's view if there is no indication in the Bill of the wish of Parliament in this matter?

Mr. GROOM.—I think so.

Mr. FENTON.—They are not doing so now.

Mr. GROOM.—It is impossible at the present time to enumerate the cases which may require consideration. It will not follow that the only position to which a returned soldier can be appointed will be that held by a temporary employee, whose six months' period has not expired and who has claim for consideration. All that we are doing now is to propose that a returned soldier, who may be appointed temporarily, shall not be limited to a term of six months. The honorable members for Flinders and Wilmut have pointed out that we must be careful lest, in removing this limitation, we convert temporary into permanent employment. They contend that

some safeguard against that should be provided.

Mr. FALKINER.—Is a temporary employee retained for six months, whether needed or not?

Mr. GROOM.—No; he is retained only so long as his services are needed, and that will continue to be the case even after the limitation of the term of temporary employment has been removed.

Mr. FENTON.—Is there any reason why a man whose services are required, and who is giving satisfactory service, should not be made a permanent employee?

Mr. GROOM.—If the particular work on which he is employed is permanent in character, the office might well be made a permanent one.

Mr. SAMPSON.—But a man in temporary employment will have the opportunity of qualifying for permanent employment in any division of the Service?

Mr. GROOM.—Yes; if he is a returned soldier.

Mr. SAMPSON.—And will still have preference in regard to the permanent service?

Mr. GROOM.—Yes; and special examinations will be provided for.

Mr. FENTON (Maribyrnong) [5.52].—I hope that we can accept the assurance of the Minister that the equities of the case will be considered whenever temporary employees are to be dispensed with to make room for returned soldiers.

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—A permanent official will always be indisposed to recommend the removal of a man who suits him.

Mr. FENTON.—The Minister, as he represents a large and populous constituency, must from time to time receive complaints of inequitable treatment from men with large family responsibilities, whose services have been dispensed with. What we all desire is that the equities of each case shall be considered, and that men with large domestic responsibilities shall not be removed merely to provide for returned soldiers who, taking everything into consideration, have not so great a claim to the positions as those who are occupying them. Certainly, men with heavy domestic responsibilities should not be removed until their term of temporary employment has expired. One of the reasons why the Public Service is not the success it should be is that temporary employees have to be dismissed after certain periods of service. Just as a permanent head has got a temporary man properly

trained for the work that he is doing, that man has to make room for another, and then, perhaps, a third follows. No business could be successfully conducted on those lines.

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—In any case, something must be left to the administration.

Mr. FENTON.—That is so. But it must have occurred to the Minister that the present system of temporary employment is unsatisfactory. When, as a member of a deputation from the Victorian Public Service, I waited on the late James Munro, then Premier of the State, and informed him that there were in the service men who had been temporarily employed for periods ranging from five to ten years, he asked, "If the services of these men have been required for so many years, why have they not been put on the permanent staff?" My reply was that that was what the men themselves claimed should be done for them. The Government Printer puts on one side the restrictions of the Public Service Act relating to temporary employment. He could not afford to have his office upset by the provision which requires the dismissal of temporary employees after six months' service. There are men in the Printing Office who have been there as temporary hands for five or six years.

Mr. CORSER.—A number of good men cannot get into the permanent service because they were too old when they entered the temporary service to be eligible for permanent employment.

Mr. FENTON.—In the Victorian Public Service Act it was specially provided, by way of amendment, that men who had proved themselves efficient in technical employment could be admitted to the permanent service. I should like to have it inserted in the Bill that, as promised by the Minister, the equities of the case on both sides shall be considered, and that men deserving consideration shall not be ignominiously pushed out of their places to make room for returned soldiers whose claims may not be so good as their own.

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—That would whittle down the principle of the Bill. Such cases are very rare.

Mr. FENTON.—If some provision is not put into the Bill, I am afraid that heads of Departments and the Public Service Commissioner may consider that, without regard to the equities of the case, returned soldiers must be appointed to all temporary positions available to them.

Mr. GROOM.—The honorable member does not object to the preference to returned soldiers?

Mr. FENTON.—No, but I object to the dismissal of men who deserve special consideration. The officials complain now that they have to replace competent men who have serious responsibilities with men who are not equally efficient. I trust that the law will be administered as the Minister promises, and that even-handed justice will be dealt out in accordance with the equities of the case.

Mr. FINLAYSON (Brisbane) [5.59].—Honorable members are agreed that preference should be given to returned soldiers, and that it is wasteful, and leads to inefficiency, to limit the period of temporary employment to five or six months. No doubt, if the Public Service Act were now under review, honorable members would be inclined to sweep away that limitation.

Mr. GROOM.—When the Act was passed the feeling of the House was that so many persons would be needing work that it would be fair to give as many opportunities for appointment as possible.

Mr. FINLAYSON.—We have now come to realize that industry is getting every day more technical, and that to dispense with the services of trained men merely because they have been employed for a certain length of time, and not because the need for their services has ceased, is foolish. I hail with satisfaction even the introduction of this thin end of the wedge, which will mean in the long run an alteration of the provision in the Public Service Act with regard to the limitation of temporary service to six or nine months. Under the existing law, a man is employed for six or nine months, and must then go, notwithstanding that he may really be needed in the Department in which he is working, and that it would pay to keep him on.

As to the point raised by the honorable member for Flinders and the honorable member for Wilmot that we are really going, by this Bill, to establish a permanent service under the name of temporary employment, I think it is well met by the provision in the principal Act under which a temporary employee is subject to immediate dismissal, whereas a permanent employee has certain guarantees that his employment shall not be interfered with, except by certain definite

methods. I am sorry that the Minister cannot give us more than his assurance that men whose responsibilities are great, and whose efforts to enlist entitle them to consideration, are going to be protected.

Mr. LAIRD SMITH.—Does not the honorable member think it would be dangerous to attempt to frame a clause to meet their position?

Mr. FINLAYSON.—There is great danger to be feared in attempting to meet individual cases by a general rule. I am sorry that the Minister cannot give us more than his assurance that such men will receive consideration, but I realize that it is about all he can give. We wish, however, to have it declared by the Minister as definitely as possible that men who have tried to enlist, but who, because of unfortunate physical deficiencies, have been rejected, as well as men whose parental responsibilities entitle them to some consideration, shall not be penalized and dismissed under this clause in order to make room for a returned single soldier. I hope that the honorable gentleman's assurance will not be forgotten in the administration of this law.

Clause agreed to.

Clause 4 agreed to.

Clause 5—

(1) Section 70A of the principal Act is amended—

(c) by omitting from sub-section (2) the words

Mr. GROOM (Darling Downs—Honorary Minister) [6.4].—I move—

That after paragraph c the following paragraph be inserted:—“and d, by adding at the end of that sub-section the words ‘or on active service in the Naval Forces.’”

Mr. TUDOR.—Is not the same result arrived at under section 34c of the Act of 1915?

Mr. GROOM.—No. The section which is being amended by this clause deals only with leave of absence to persons who are called up for service. The amendment is intended to bring within its provisions members of the Naval Forces on active service.

Mr. TUDOR (Yarra) [6.6].—This matter was brought under my notice when I held office as Minister for Trade and Customs. Men who had served in the Naval Forces were found to be particularly well suited to carry out for the Department certain duties connected with quarantine and lighthouse work, as well as the duties of Customs watchmen and searchers. We

therefore provided in the Public Service Act of 1915 that—

Any person not more than fifty years of age, who has served in the permanent Naval Forces of the Commonwealth for the full period for which he enlisted or engaged, and has a satisfactory record, shall, without passing the prescribed examination, be eligible for appointment to any office in the Department of Trade and Customs which is classified in the General Division of the Public Service.

That provision was limited to employment in the Customs Department, because these men were specially suited for the work of the Department.

Mr. GROOM.—Quite so. But this clause simply amends section 70A of the principal Act, which deals only with the question of leave.

Amendment agreed to.

Clause, as amended, agreed to.

Mr. GROOM (Darling Downs—Honorary Minister) [6.8].—I move—

That the following new clause be inserted:—

“1A. Section 2 of the principal Act is amended by adding at the end thereof the following sub-section:—

“(2) References in this Act to persons who have served in any Expeditionary Force raised under the provisions of the Defence Act 1903-1915 shall be deemed to include members of the Army Medical Corps Nursing Service accepted or appointed by the Director-General of Medical Services for service outside Australia and members of the Naval Forces who have been on active service outside Australia.”

The proposed new clause, if agreed to, will form part of the definition section of the original Act, and it will practically define the words “those who have served in the Expeditionary Force,” which occur several times in the Bill, as including nurses, and also members of the Naval Forces, who have been on active service. Shortly put, the object is to extend the provisions of this measure to nurses accepted or appointed for active service outside Australia, and to make it perfectly clear that members of the Naval Forces who have been on active service outside Australia are also covered by it.

Mr. FINLAYSON (Brisbane) [6.9].—The proposed new clause is very satisfactory, except for the last two words, “who have been on active service ‘outside Australia.’” Quite a number of Naval men have been sent on active service to North Queensland, Thursday Island, and Papua, and these men, under

the clause as it stands, will be excluded from the provisions of the Bill. In short, there will be no recognition of their services. I do not think it can be the desire of the Minister to exclude them from any of the rights and privileges which are to be enjoyed under this Bill by men who have served abroad. The fact that these men, who volunteered for active service, have been detailed for service in Australia—a number of them have been detailed for service on garrison duty in Australia—should not exclude them from the benefit of this Bill.

Mr. FLEMING.—And many of them were kept on garrison duty against their will.

Mr. FINLAYSON.—Quite so.

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—This Bill deals only with returned soldiers.

Mr. FINLAYSON.—Surely the men to whom I refer should come within the category of returned soldiers and sailors! I know of men who have returned from service at Port Moresby and Thursday Island, where they suffered just as much from malaria as any man at the Front has suffered from trench fever. Are they to receive no consideration? One of the men whom I have in mind was employed as a chauffeur by the State Commandant in Brisbane on the ground that he was a returned soldier, but under this provision he will be excluded from the benefits of the Bill. He will not be recognised as a returned soldier. Those who are doing active service in Australia are just as much entitled to consideration as those who are doing active service outside Australia. This war is being won, not only by the men who go to the other side of the world to fight, but by others who have volunteered and who are doing splendid service within the Commonwealth.

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—There must be a limit somewhere.

Mr. FINLAYSON.—I do not think it is fair to exclude these men, seeing that they have been, in many cases, detailed, against their will, for service in Australia.

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—This Bill will not prevent us from treating them well.

Mr. GROOM (Darling Downs—Honorary Minister) [6.13].—Most of the men in the Navy are members of the Permanent Naval Forces, who are doing lengthy service. As soon as their ships are ordered outside Australian waters, on

active service, those men will come under the provisions of this Bill. Under this clause the Bill will also apply to nurses belonging to the Army Medical Corps nursing service who have gone abroad on active service. There is the case of those nurses who have been accepted and have not gone to the Front.

Mr. TUDOR.—I think the proposed new clause will include them, since it refers to nurses and doctors "accepted or appointed" for service outside Australia.

Mr. GROOM.—That is so; but the general clause will apply to all those who are sent on active service outside Australia, as I understand practically all go to the Front. The intention is to put members of both the Naval and Military Forces, as nearly as practicable, on the same footing. This clause was only drafted this morning, and I have just received it from the Government Printer.

Mr. TUDOR.—This is "rush" work.

Mr. GROOM.—Not at all. This amendment has been rendered necessary, as a matter of fact, by a defect in the honorable member's Bill of 1915. The assumption was that it covered everything desired in this direction, but it was found that it did not. I give the honorable member for Brisbane my assurance that I shall ask the Parliamentary Draftsman to examine the clause closely, and see that it provides, as far as practicable, for identical conditions in respect of both the Naval and Military branches of the Australian Imperial Force.

Mr. TUDOR (Yarra) [6.15].—The Minister states that this Bill is to cover an omission which, apparently, was made in the Act of 1915. But any one who has been connected with Parliament must admit that no Act is perfect, and must be amended from time to time; and no person could then foresee what legislation we should have to deal with in 1917. We provided in the War Pensions Bill that only those persons should benefit who had volunteered for active service abroad, and who were injured while on service, and this prevented pensions being given to men who were injured or contracted disease when in camp in Australia. I know the case of a young doctor who enlisted for active service abroad; but he did such good work at the Base Hospital in the meningitis outbreak that he was kept there by General Fetherston. This

young man was extremely anxious to get to the Front, but he performed the duties allotted to him, with the result that he contracted the disease and died. That young man died as much in the service of the Empire as if he had been killed in Gallipoli or France; but there was great difficulty in obtaining a pension for his mother, simply because he had not gone abroad, although there are letters in the Department which show that he applied time after time to go on active service. Then, again, there are men who, in the early days of the war, were brought from South Australia and other States, and sent to Thursday Island and New Guinea, and such men are as much entitled to the benefits of the Act as are those who went overseas. I trust the Minister will consider the point I have raised.

Mr. GROOM.—I promise you to see that there is equality of conditions between the Army and the Navy.

Mr. WALLACE (West Sydney) [6.20].—There are at present about 600 or 700 of our seamen not actually in the Navy, but engaged in war work, inasmuch as they are employed on transports outside Australia. There are some twenty Inter-State boats manned by Australian seamen engaged in this work, and, in addition, some twenty-two interned German vessels, also manned by our own men. I take it that, at the termination of the war, these ships will have to be returned to their original owners, and that these men, as a consequence, will be unemployed. Their claims, I think, ought also to be considered.

Mr. GROOM.—These men are doing the same class of work as is being done by other civilians in the community outside Government employment; the only difference being that they are employed by the Commonwealth.

Mr. WALLACE.—All the same, I submit that the claims of these men ought to be recognised, as the claims of similar men are recognised in Great Britain. The men engaged on the trawlers in the North Sea, looking for mines, are merchant seamen; and what sailors call the "dummy fleet" is also manned by men of the merchant service; and all these come under the Naval Act, of Great Britain. Last week there were men returned to Australia who have been employed for fourteen months running

troops over the Channel; and surely these men must be regarded as having been engaged in war work, pure and simple. As I say, I suppose these German vessels engaged in transport work will have to be restored to their original owners at the termination of the war.

Mr. GROOM.—Will they?

Mr. WALLACE.—I hope they will not; but if they are, it will mean that about 700 men will be without work. Some of the vessels which will be returned to their owners were previously manned by lascars, and, with the ship-owners' weakness for cheap labour, it is possible that our men may be replaced. If we had an assurance that black labour would not be re-employed, the circumstances, would, of course, be different; but, in any case, the men to whom I have referred ought to have preference along with men who have been actually on active service.

Proposed new clause agreed to.

Amendment (by Mr. GROOM) proposed—

That the following new clause be inserted:—

1B. After section twenty-one of the principal Act the following section is inserted:—

"21A. Notwithstanding anything contained in the last preceding section any person who has served with satisfactory record in any Expeditionary Force raised under the provisions of the Defence Act 1903-1915, and who is eligible for appointment to the Clerical Division, may be appointed to such class and subdivision as the Commissioner determines."

Mr. FINLAYSON (Brisbane) [6.26].—The Commissioner should have certain discretionary powers, but this provision is altogether too wide, inasmuch as it would enable him to put these men into any section of the Service, and thereby deprive others, who have been in the Service for many years, of their opportunity for promotion.

Mr. GROOM.—What is your alternative—that they should be appointed only to the lowest positions?

Mr. FINLAYSON.—Not to the lowest; there should be a certain minimum. We all know what a great thing seniority is in the Public Service.

Mr. GROOM.—The basis of the Public Service Act is efficiency.

Mr. FINLAYSON.—Promotion and annual increments do not always go by efficiency, but very often by seniority, and this clause would not give a fair deal.

Mr. TUDOR.—Would this clause give the Commissioner the right to put returned soldiers over a number of other men already in the Service?

Mr. GROOM.—If there is a vacancy, and the returned soldier is qualified, he would be eligible for appointment.

Mr. TUDOR.—Would the Commissioner be able to appoint soldiers as letter-sorters over thousands of letter-carriers who are qualified?

Mr. FINLAYSON.—He could put them ahead of every letter-sorter.

Mr. GROOM.—What is the honorable member's alternative?

Mr. FINLAYSON.—It ought to be provided that this power shall not jeopardize the promotion of any man now in the Service.

Mr. GROOM.—That would mean no preference at all.

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—Honorable members opposite seem to desire to whittle down the clauses until there is nothing left in the Bill.

Mr. FINLAYSON.—I cannot imagine that the Minister for the Navy really means that.

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—I do really mean it.

Mr. FINLAYSON.—Then I strongly dissent from the suggestion.

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—It is a fact, whether you dissent or not.

Mr. FINLAYSON.—It is certainly not my intention, for I am quite sincere in my wish to give the returned soldiers first consideration. Surely the Government do not mean to take away the privileges of those men who are now in the Service?

Mr. GROOM.—This is not taking away their privileges.

Mr. FINLAYSON.—The clause gives the Commissioner power to fill every vacancy with returned soldiers, to the detriment and exclusion of men whose services have been continuous, and who are entitled to consideration.

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—If first you settle in your own mind that the Commissioner is a fool, it may be so.

Mr. FINLAYSON.—I do not suggest that for a moment.

Mr. GROOM.—How would the honorable member give preference to soldiers?

Mr. FINLAYSON.—There should be a provision that preference is subject to the recognition of the rights of the men now in the Service.

Mr. GROOM.—What rights?

Mr. FINLAYSON.—Well, the right of promotion.

Mr. GROOM.—If every man had that right, a soldier could not be appointed, and the result would be that every one would have to start on the lowest rung at the lowest salary.

Mr. FINLAYSON.—That opens the way to the other extreme view, that a returned soldier could be appointed to the highest offices over the heads of others.

Mr. GROOM.—Do you not think that the Commissioner will exercise his powers with reasonable discretion?

Sitting suspended from 6.30 to 7.45 p.m.

Mr. MATHEWS (Melbourne Ports) [7.46].—Repeatedly public servants have represented to me good reasons why the Public Service Commissioner should not have as much power as he has at present, but the Minister is now proposing to give him greater power. I admit that there might be a returned soldier who is a very able man, and who had occupied a position outside the Service equal to that to which the Commissioner might appoint him. But the placing of men over the heads of others who have been in the Department for years, and understood fully the routine work, is bound to lead to dissension. No doubt the Commissioner may use discretion in the matter, but I think we should adopt the suggestion made by public servants in the past that before a junior is appointed above his seniors the latter should have an opportunity of objecting.

Mr. LAIRD SMITH.—They can do that now.

Mr. MATHEWS.—What is the use of objecting after the appointment is made and gazetted? I have known of dozens of cases of men appointed over the heads of others, and the appointments gazetted before anybody knew anything about them, and by that time the new appointees were fixtures, and could not be moved. Thus men get seniority over others who have been in the Service for a greater number of years. A Judge of the Supreme Court who was overlooked when a Chief Justice was being appointed was heard to say that in future he would do only his bare duty. When so high an official as a Judge felt hurt at being overreached by a junior, and announced such a resolve as that I have mentioned, we

can readily understand that the same feeling would result in other walks of the Public Service. If the Commissioner is given the further powers proposed in this Bill a feeling will be created that it is useless to try to make oneself fit for promotion, because the Commissioner may, at his own sweet will, advance juniors above their seniors. I have no objection to doing everything possible to make things easier for the returned soldier, but I shall vote against this clause just as I would if it were an amendment dealing with public servants other than soldiers, I suggest that when promotions are intended the intention to promote should be gazetted, and thus allow an opportunity for objection by those officers who have been overlooked. If the objection were a trivial one in the opinion of somebody considered capable of dealing with the matter, nothing further need be done. We must remember that the Public Service is a huge machine, and the less irksome the conditions the better the result that will be obtained.

Mr. ARCHIBALD (Hindmarsh) [7.53].—The honorable members who objected to the clause seem not to understand the facts of the case. I am astonished at the efforts put forward in the interests of those who have not made any sacrifice for their country such as has been made by the men who have been on active service. We have stated in Parliament, and the country has indorsed our view, that the returned soldiers should be dealt with not only justly, but generously. The Minister is now proposing that if a vacancy occurs the Public Service Commissioner may appoint any returned soldier whom he considers fit for the job. I cannot see that the returned soldier will get much benefit out of this provision, and it seems to me that the objectors are making much ado about nothing. These desperate efforts in behalf of the cold-footers are rather amusing. The Civil Service is a pretty compact body, and heads of Departments generally are anxious to get through their work as quickly and efficiently as possible. I believe that, as a body, the Public Service do their work efficiently. Naturally the heads would prefer to have trained men about them. A leading civil servant told me that ten years of training was necessary to render a man any good to the head of his Department.

Mr. FALKNER.—Any man who has occupied ten years in becoming efficient ought to have been sacked long ago.

Mr. ARCHIBALD.—The head of a Department should not have to instruct his subordinates in every detail of what he requires; they should be sufficiently acquainted with the Department to almost anticipate what the head wishes done. And as a rule, departmental heads will be reluctant to have new trained men introduced into the Service. So, too, an active Minister who is taking a live interest in his Department will naturally desire to have his work done as quickly and smoothly as possible, and if representation is made to him that the influx of returned soldiers is interfering with the efficiency of the Service his tendency will be not to open the door any wider than he can avoid. The more efficient the Public Service is made the greater will be the handicap of the returned soldier; therefore, the danger honorable members have anticipated seems very remote. On the other hand, we have a pledged duty to the returned soldiers. We have talked about what we will do for them, and if, when the opportunity arises, we close the door against them, we shall brand ourselves as a band of hypocrites. I hope the Minister will adhere to the clause as drafted, because, so far as I can see, only the exceptional men will be admitted to the Service.

Returned soldiers ought to be in two classes, the men who have actually fought and those who have merely been abroad, and have been returned invalided without having been actually to the Front. A man may have been to Egypt or France, and because of illness have been sent home without even having heard a shot fired. He has had a trip at the Commonwealth expense, and doubtless when the war medals are issued he will get one. We shall have returning directly a lot of soldiers who have been nothing but drawing-room knights, loafing round Westminster, near head-quarters, and who have been absolutely as safe from shot and shell as any of us in this chamber. We ought to draw a distinction between them and those who have gone to the Front and risked their lives for their country. A classification of that kind should be made before we go any further with the Bill.

There is a great deal in the remark of the honorable member for West Sydney, that the men in our mercantile marine have done yeoman service during the war. I do not say that provision should be made for them in this Bill, but after the war is over they will have a strong claim to any positions going on any shipping owned or controlled by the Commonwealth. However, I am not afraid that justice will not be done to them by this or succeeding Parliaments.

Mr. FINLAYSON (Brisbane) [8.4].—I am quite unable to follow the argument of the honorable member for Hindmarsh for differentiation between returned soldiers. Many, not only on the permanent staff and at the Defence Department, but also amongst those who enlisted from private life, have been refused permission to go to the Front. Many of these are rendering excellent service, and doing work equally essential to the carrying on of successful operations as those who are actually in the firing line.

Mr. ARCHIBALD.—I was referring more to "cold-footers," who did not want to go to the Front.

Mr. FINLAYSON.—These men are not "cold-footers," and no such distinction as the honorable member suggests should be drawn. As the honorable member for Robertson interjected earlier, it is not their fault that they are not sent to the Front. Many are put into other branches, and sent to other places.

Mr. ARCHIBALD.—And many have volunteered for certain branches so that they should not go to the Front. Any number have got into the artillery for that reason.

Mr. FINLAYSON.—They are not going into the artillery to avoid risks. They are taking as big risks, and doing as excellent service, as those in other branches. Sometimes there is more danger at the rear than at the front, as is shown by the statement published the other day, that shells were falling 20 miles behind the firing line.

Will the Minister permit me to supplement my earlier remarks about priority of consideration for returned soldiers to the exclusion of those already in the Service? Section 44 of the Victorian De-

fences and Discipline Act of 1890 provides that—

All persons now or hereafter to be engaged to serve in the Naval or Military Forces of Victoria, and who have served for a period of not less than five years, shall be entitled at the expiration of such period to be employed in the Non-clerical Division of the Public Service, on fulfilling all requirements as to examination and insurance for persons entering such division, and such persons shall be entitled to be appointed to any vacancy which may occur therein in priority to all other persons whatsoever.

That is practically on the lines of the clause the Minister is suggesting to-day, but, in 1893, that section was altered by section 18 of the Public Service Act, which provided—

Notwithstanding the provisions of section 44 of the Defences and Discipline Act 1890, persons who have served for a period of not less than five years in the Naval or Military Forces of Victoria shall not be entitled to be appointed to any such vacancy in the Non-clerical Division in priority to any officers of the Public Service.

Our duty to returned soldiers is, no doubt, of paramount importance, but it should not be exclusive.

Mr. GROOM.—If you followed that section, you would say to them, "You shall be appointed, but you shall get no preference."

Mr. FINLAYSON.—The Minister must distinguish between preference and priority. The Commissioner should not have power to give them priority over men in the Service who have earned, and are entitled to, their promotion.

Mr. GROOM.—What do you mean by "priority"?

Mr. FINLAYSON.—The basis of promotion in the Public Service is that, so far as divisions within classes are concerned, the officers automatically move forward, and receive their increments accordingly, without any question of seniority or anything else; but before they move from one class to another they have to show merit. The question of seniority also comes in, but merit is the prior consideration. The clause gives the Commissioner power to place returned soldiers in any grade and in any class, which must necessarily mean the exclusion of men who look upon the vacancies as their only opportunities for promotion. If the honorable member for Flinders is right, we shall, by this clause, introduce the very danger he pointed out, of having men in

the Service without the experience and knowledge of the Service which is essential to enable them to render efficient service to the public. There is such a thing in the Service as efficiency, which is attained only by experience. It is a peculiar kind of training, yet, under this clause, the Commissioner has power, because a returned soldier has certain clerical qualifications, to put him in any of the higher positions in the Clerical Division. There is no limit to it, and some limit ought to be imposed to protect the men in the Service.

Mr. GROOM.—What limitation do you suggest?

Mr. FINLAYSON.—A proviso that these appointments shall not prejudice the claims of men in the Public Service to promotion which they have earned.

Mr. McWILLIAMS.—You would give them no preference at all.

Mr. FINLAYSON.—The preference could be limited to certain grades. I would then let them work their way up to the top the same as any one else.

Mr. GROOM.—Then you would not recognise any priority in the lower grades?

Mr. FINLAYSON.—I say "Give the returned soldiers preference to get in." We all know that once a man gets into the Public Service, he is as difficult to shift as a Presbyterian minister. I have sufficient confidence in the returned soldiers to think that, if they once get a chance in the lower grades of the Service, they will soon show their ability, and get the experience to qualify them for promotion to the higher grades. But I would not put the whole of the members of the Service who occupy higher positions, and who are looking forward to opportunities for promotion, aside, and allow an outsider, no matter what his qualifications may be, to step in front of them.

Mr. McWILLIAMS.—Do you call a returned soldier an outsider?

Mr. FINLAYSON.—So far as the Public Service is concerned.

Mr. McWILLIAMS.—The object of the Bill is to put him on the inside.

Mr. FINLAYSON.—He should get in; but it is not fair to those already in to give the Commissioner power to appoint him to any position. In the interests of the men who have given years

of good honest service to the Commonwealth, their privileges should be protected to some extent at least.

Mr. GROOM (Darling Downs—Honorary Minister) [8.13].—I cannot accept the modification suggested by the honorable member for Brisbane, who says, in effect, "I believe preference should be given to returned soldiers; they are entitled to it, having made greater sacrifices and run greater risks than anybody else; but that preference must not interfere with the seniority or priority of men already in the Service." That is practically a negation of the doctrine of preference. Alternatively the honorable member suggests limiting the preference to certain grades, thus saying to returned men, "You are good enough to fight and lay down your life for your country, and so we will give you preference to the lower grades, but hands off the higher grades of the Public Service of Australia."

Mr. FINLAYSON.—I would give them a chance to work up to the higher grades.

Mr. GROOM.—What would that chance amount to, if you recognised all the seniority and priority rights of those already in the Service as superior to the claims of the returned soldier? The honorable member practically tells the returned soldier that he must begin at the bottom rung of the ladder, no matter what his age may be. He may have been a lieutenant-colonel, and have discharged the functions of the highest administrative positions in the Military Forces, yet the honorable member would make him start on the lowest stair.

Mr. HEITMANN. — Perhaps made subordinate to some "cold-footer"!

Mr. GROOM.—Under the Public Service Act a single man over the age of twenty-one must receive at least £126 a year, and a married man £156 a year. Is it desired to make the returned soldier begin at that stage? If the proposal of the honorable member were accepted it would, in effect, negative our attempt to give preference to returned soldiers. Apparently, although the honorable member wishes to give preference to returned men, his concern is rather for the preservation of the rights of those already in the Service. The Bill will enable the Commissioner to appoint men,

who become eligible, to such positions as he may think them capable of filling. The Commissioner must be assumed to be fitted for his office, and to have the good of the Public Service at heart. No one would minimize the work of many of our public servants. During the war the officials in many branches have done most meritoriously, as all who have come into contact with them will admit. One has only to remember what the girls in the clothing factory have done in giving up spare time to work for Red Cross funds and other organizations for the benefit of the soldiers. The Commissioner will have regard to the efficiency of the men offering, and will appoint to the higher vacancies only such as he is satisfied will capably discharge the duties appertaining to the office. The object of the Bill is not to have inefficient men put into positions in which efficiency is required. The Commissioner, in giving preference, must have regard to efficiency, and to circumstances generally. I think we might leave the matter to his good sense and justice in the application of the provisions of this Bill.

Mr. FENTON.—I hope that he will read the report of these debates.

Mr. GROOM.—Perhaps our discussions are read more earnestly by members of the Public Service than they are by us. I think that the honorable member will find his fears groundless, and that justice will be done to those whose interests he is championing.

Mr. MATHEWS (Melbourne Ports) [8.19].—I am not afraid that I may be misunderstood. It is amusing to see some honorable members waving the flag. They seem to think that they can prove their patriotism only by shouting it from the housetops.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. ATKINSON).—Order!

Mr. MATHEWS.—The honorable member for Hindmarsh said that those who disagreed with him were wanting in patriotism. You did not call him to order for saying that, Mr. Temporary Chairman. The Minister has not answered the arguments of those who desire some amendment of the provision under discussion. Some silly asses would regard as a "cold-footer" a man who had endeavoured to go to the Front, but was not allowed to do so. The honorable member for Hindmarsh would say that such a man was a "cold-footer."

Mr. GROOM.—No. The honorable member for Hindmarsh did not say anything like that.

Mr. MATHEWS.—I desire that a fair deal shall be given to those in the Service. Those who are likely to be overlooked in regard to an appointment should have an opportunity of protesting beforehand; it is too late to protest when an appointment has been made. The Minister and those who have expressed themselves as desirous of protecting the soldier should not allow any one to be unfairly promoted over his head by the Public Service Commissioner. The Minister did not refer to that possibility. Like others on his side he is content to wave the flag. He did not deal with the position put by the honorable member for Brisbane, whose contention is that returned soldiers should have preference in the matter of appointment to the Public Service, but, once there, should be required to fit themselves for promotion to higher positions. In my opinion, the provision as it stands may work adversely to many returned soldiers, and to many men who wished to go to the war, but were not allowed to do so.

Mr. HEITMANN.—Does the honorable member think that the Commissioner will appoint men to positions for which they are unfit?

Mr. MATHEWS.—Such appointments have been made many times in the Public Service. When a new member, and young and innocent, I interviewed the ex-Public Service Commissioner regarding a case, and was told that the letter of the law must be followed. On the next occasion that I brought a case before him, he said, "Oh, we have to observe the spirit of the law." Finally, when I had both the letter and the spirit of the law in my favour, I was told that I wanted too much. We know that appointments have been made unfairly, and I wish to prevent similar unfairness in the future. Surely the Minister, or his draftsman, can frame machinery which would do this. The honorable member for Hindmarsh, like myself, is one of the "Would-to-God-they-would-take-me" men. He complains of men staying in the artillery so that they may not be sent to the Front. Like me, he would, if accepted, be found where the bullets were thickest, that is, in the ammunition van. I am not afraid that the returned soldiers will not trust me to look after their interests just as much as they would trust those who are

waving the flag. It is not proper, when a member wishes to improve a measure, that he should be accused of want of patriotism by those who support the Government.

Mr. McWILLIAMS (Franklin) [8.27].—I hope that the provision will not be diluted in the least. The object of the Bill is that returned soldiers shall have preference in the Public Service. The honorable member for Brisbane said, in effect, "I am willing to allow returned soldiers to have preference in regard to the lowest positions in the Service, if care be taken that they should never get any higher." But the object of the Bill, which gives effect to the desire of the majority of honorable members, and of a still greater majority outside, is that any provision of the Public Service Act which prevents a fair preference being given to returned soldiers shall be thrust aside. It is our intention that there shall be no position in the Public Service which shall not be open to a returned soldier. Is a man who has spent two or three years at the Front, and has played a man's part in defending his country, to be compelled to enter into competition with schoolboys to secure a position in the Public Service? An objection to the system of promotion which prevails in our camps is that it gives an advantage to boys who have just left school, and in consequence find it much more easy to get up textbooks and pass examinations than it is to men who have been away from school for five or ten years, and yet have a much wider knowledge and a better general education. If the proposal of the honorable member for Brisbane were accepted, the preference offered to a returned soldier would be like our Tariff preference, nothing but a farce. The wish of the majority of honorable members is that returned men shall have preference in regard to every branch of Government employment; that wherever there is a position for which a returned man is fitted, he shall have preference in regard to it over all comers. He should certainly have preference over men who, by remaining at home, have had time to study subjects of examination.

We give the Public Service Commissioner practically unlimited power in the administration of the whole Public Service of the Commonwealth, but in this one case we are told he should not be allowed to exercise his discretion; that he should be

bound down by hard and fast rules which will make it impossible for returned soldiers entering the Service ever to get very far beyond the lowest grade.

Neither the Federal nor State Governments have gone far enough in this direction. There are many positions, such as those of ticket collectors at railway gates, and tramway conductors, which might well be filled by maimed men who have returned from the Front. I say deliberately that the eligible who has stayed at home, and has not offered to go to the Front, should make way for the man who has volunteered, and has done his bit for the Empire. Instead of weakening this Bill, I would strengthen it very considerably in the direction I have named. If there is one class to whom preference should be given every time, it is that of the men who have gone to the Front—in many cases, they have thrown up good positions in order to do so—and who, after fighting there for two or three years, have returned so injured as to be unable to follow their former occupations. If there is in the Public Service an eligible man who has not volunteered, then, be he married or single, he should make way for such a man.

Mr. LYNCH.—Would the honorable member treat even married men in that way?

Mr. McWILLIAMS.—A man who has a large family certainly ought not to be displaced, but married men, with practically no one dependent upon them, and who have not volunteered, although eligible for enlistment, should make way for those who have. My remarks, however, in this connexion apply more particularly to single men in the Service of both the State and the Federal Governments.

Mr. POYNTON.—What about the men outside the Public Service who have not volunteered?

Mr. McWILLIAMS.—We cannot deal with them in this Bill, but we can deal with the eligibles in the Federal Service. I hope that the Minister will not allow this clause to be diluted.

Mr. YATES (Adelaide) [8.30].—There seems to be a very laudable desire on the part of honorable members to do everything possible for those who have joined the Australian Imperial Force, regardless of how they got there, or why they joined. Every one says to-day, "We cannot do enough for our heroes!" but

ten years after the war it will be a case of, "You cannot do enough to forget them." The honorable member for Franklin said that he hoped that preference of employment would be given to returned soldiers in respect of not only the Commonwealth, but the State Public Services. Why not go further, and provide for such preference in private employment? I was going to say, "Preference to unionists," and even had I done so, I should not have been far out, since the ratio of workers to idlers in the general community is well maintained in our fighting Forces. When the men come back from the Front, they will still be unionists, and despite all Acts of Parliament the commercial community will take care that they are bled just as freely as are any other section.

Why should not this preference be extended to private employment? After all, it is the private employer who is reaping the benefit of this war. It may not be a sordid trade war, but it is a very payable war so far as that section of the community is concerned. A few nights ago, I referred to the increase of deposits in the Associated Banks of Australia since the outbreak of war. As a matter of fact I dealt only with the first two years of the war and showed that in that time these bank deposits had increased to the extent of £35,000,000. The latest figures, however, show that since 1914 the bank balances of the commercial community of Australia have increased by £50,000,000. That increase is the result of the war, and it does not include the amounts which have been subscribed to various patriotic funds designed to carry on the work that should be done collectively by the Commonwealth.

This preference to returned soldiers and sailors should be extended to private employment for the reasons I have stated. In my camp there are hundreds of fellows who have left good jobs to which, should they have the misfortune to be injured at the Front, they will never be able to return with any likelihood of earning their former wages.

Mr. McWILLIAMS.—This measure will help them.

Mr. YATES.—I hope so, and if I am spared I shall do my best to see that it is properly administered. I want these men to be helped, not only when flag-

waving is popular, but when we return once more to the every-day life of peace time. I fear that it will then be a case of "The devil take the man who cannot swim." I hope that care will be taken to see that this law is equitably administered. We hear it said again and again, "Too much cannot be done for the soldier. He should have the best." But he does not get the best while he is soldiering. No one even takes the trouble to visit the camps to see how the soldiers are getting on.

Mr. FENTON.—We tried to get butter for the men in camp.

Mr. YATES.—We are told that the soldiers in camp cannot be allowed 4 oz. of butter a day because that would mean an expenditure of £625 per diem. But the commercial community can make £50,000,000 in three years out of the war and nothing is said about it. I was told to-day of a returned soldier who has lost an arm, and who, before he volunteered, was earning £6 a week as a glass-blower. To-day he is getting only 30s. per week, and has no hope of making any headway.

Mr. McWILLIAMS.—Is it not the very object of this Bill to help such a man?

Mr. YATES.—The Bill should assist such men. I trust we shall not be told that a returned soldier cannot enter the Public Service for the reason that he is unable to pass the "prescribed examination," or cannot lick stamps because he has lost half his tongue. Such a man should be found employment if it is only that of drinking water so that he may perspire freely.

This Bill is to apply to those who have served in the Expeditionary Forces. I should like to have from the Minister a definition of the words "who is a member of the Expeditionary Forces."

Mr. Groom.—We have already dealt with the definition clause.

Mr. YATES.—There are men who have volunteered and who have returned in bad health, although perhaps they have never actually seen the Front. Will they come within that term and so come under the Bill? Men may throw up their jobs with the object of going to the Front, and yet at the end of the war find that they have not been required. My own may be a case in point, though I do not intend to dispose of my job; notwithstanding the honorable member for

Echuca, I shall still hang on to it in the interests of those who have sent me here. Honorable members will see that I am quite frank in regard to the position I take up. I am not like some of the Fusionists opposite, who changed their political skins and accepted the vote of Liberals while still calling themselves Labour men, with the sole object of hanging on to their jobs. I wish to know whether, in the judgment of the Commissioner, such remarks as fell from the honorable member for Hindmarsh are likely to be taken into account? It will be remembered that that honorable member said men had gone into the artillery so that they should not be sent to the Front; and I know that such an idea is resented in the camp where I am placed. In this connexion I wish to make my own position quite clear to those who are mean and contemptible enough to attribute wrong motives to me, in the hope that some consideration will be shown to others who are similarly placed, and who may have given up their positions in private life. The honorable member for Grey accused me of having made political capital out of my enlistment; and I should like honorable members to be in possession of the exact circumstances. After an interjection in this House from the honorable member for Grampians, I went straight home, and from there to the recruiting office, without telling even my wife that I intended to enlist. When I gave my name to the officer in charge, he asked me if I was the Mr. Yates who was a member of Parliament, but I said that that had nothing to do with the matter—that I had come there for the purpose of enlisting. I was asked no further questions, and was passed right through. I informed the officials that I would go into camp on the 30th October, after the referendum, and I was quite prepared to honour my promise, but circumstances intervened, and it was the 7th November when I got there. I was not asked into which arm of the Force I would go, but, on the 22nd December, was put into the camp where the men are treated for their teeth. I was placed in some unit, but I applied for a month's leave of absence on account of my appointment as chairman of the Recruiting Committee.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN.—How does the honorable member propose

to connect his remarks with the question before the Chair?

Mr. YATES.—I wish to ascertain how men, who, through no fault of their own, may not go to the Front, are to be treated under this Bill, and to that end I am citing my own case. The fact that I am still in camp at the present time is not any fault of my own, but the fault of the Minister for Defence, and this I must make clear, or I shall be simply using words and words like those used by the Win-the-war party. I was due in camp again on 12th February, but nothing having been done in recruiting owing to the absence of the Governor of the State, I applied for another month's leave. The honorable member for Grey has often asked what I have done for recruiting, and my reply is that in the month of March there was more recruiting in my district than in any other district during the same time.

Mr. POYNTON.—If you are not very careful, you will be the last man.

Mr. YATES.—Not so, because wherever I am the honorable member will be behind. I should like the honorable member to tell us how many recruiting meetings have been held in the Grey district, and for how many recruits he is responsible. I submit I have a right to give the circumstances of my own case, so that honorable members may have some knowledge of it, though that knowledge may be unpalatable to them. The recruiting campaign was not satisfactory to me; there was not enough "ginger" in it, and we were unable to spend anything or do anything.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN.—The honorable member must confine his remarks to the clause.

Mr. YATES.—This clause deals with members of the Expeditionary Force.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN.—It deals with appointments to the Public Service.

Mr. YATES.—I am trying to ascertain from the Minister what will be the position of those members of the Force who are not sent to the Front, for there are bound to be some at the close of the war. I am giving the actual case of a man who has not gone to the Front, and who, according to the honorable member for Grey, will be the last to go. I wish to demonstrate that it is not my fault that I am not sent to the Front; and I think

that the circumstances of my enlistment are relevant to the subject before us. In the absence of any recruiting work I went into camp.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN.—The honorable member must confine himself to the clause.

Mr. YATES.—I must bow to your ruling, but I submit that the clause deals with members of the Expeditionary Force.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN.—The honorable member, so far, has been retailing to the Committee what happened to him when he enlisted.

Mr. YATES.—It is not my fault that the case I am citing is my own. If you rule me out of order, I must abandon my argument, but I desired to place on record the incidents surrounding my detention in camp. I should like your ruling as to what are members of the Expeditionary Force.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN.—If the honorable member seriously puts that question to me, I must tell him that I am not here to interpret the Bill. That is for the Minister and the Public Service Commissioner to do.

Mr. YATES.—Seeing that the Minister, in all probability, knows more than you do—with all respect to your position, sir—he, I think, will advise you that I am quite in order in dealing with the case of a member of the Expeditionary Force who, for good reasons, may not go to the Front. I submit that my own is a case similar to many which may crop up at any time. The Commissioner is left with discretionary power, and, in such a case as I have detailed, he may decide that a man is not entitled to preference, and I wish to know the true position. To that end I desire to place on record the case of a member of the Expeditionary Force, named G. E. Yates, and to show the reasons he has not been sent to the Front.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN.—I must rule that that is quite irrelevant to the clause.

Mr. YATES.—I do not feel inclined to challenge your ruling, but I wish to place the matter on record, because I have sent it to the newspapers, and the censor has cut it out—an action that shows how much fairness there is in the Censor's Department.

Mr. GROOM.—Then you know, and you are not asking for information?

Mr. YATES.—I know where I stand in the estimation of some honorable members, but their attitude is not because of their opinion, but because of their political spleen.

Mr. GROOM.—The honorable member desires to know whether —

Mr. YATES.—I do not desire to know anything. My thirst for information has been assuaged by the Chairman, and I am satisfied. I suggest that some honorable members opposite look eligible, if they are not, and, as there are many ways of becoming members of the Expeditionary Force, I think they ought to go to the enlisting office. Whatever amendments may be made in the Bill or the Act I hope that the generosity of Parliament will be demonstrated by more than these debates—that when the measure becomes law the men will have the good time that they were promised. But what has the Commonwealth given to the men? The women of Australia have done more for the men than the Government have, inasmuch as they have, at least, provided a shelter on the St. Kilda-road. There are also huts erected by the Presbyterian body and the Young Men's Christian Association, but it is only recently that the latter has been able to build a chimney and supply a fire. If there had been a genuine desire on behalf of the Government to assist the men there would have been radiators in that place months before now and, moreover, the men would have been given some vegetables to vary their diet.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN.—If the honorable member persists in evading my ruling, I shall ask him to discontinue.

Mr. YATES.—I am sorry I wandered away from cases like my own, and from the general administration of the Act as affected by this Bill. However, if this measure does not turn out what it ought to be, our soldiers are progressive voters, with minds broadened by experience, and they will speedily decapitate the present Liberal Win-the-war party.

Proposed new clause agreed to.

Mr. GROOM (Darling Downs—Honorary Minister) [9.0].—I move—

That the following new clause be inserted:—

1c. Section 27 of the principal Act is amended by inserting, after paragraph c, the following words:—"and may empower the Commissioner to specify that any particular examination for admission to the Clerical Division is only for persons who have served with satisfactory record in

any Expeditionary Force raised under the provisions of the Defence Act 1903-1915."

Under section 27 of the principal Act, the Governor-General has power to prescribe regulations for the examination of persons desirous of admission to the Public Service. We are proposing this insertion after paragraph c, because it is realized that men of thirty and forty years of age, having left school many years ago, might require to be submitted to a special examination.

Proposed new clause agreed to.

Amendment (by Mr. GROOM) proposed—

That the following new clause be inserted:—

In. After section 29 of the principal Act, the following section is inserted:—

"29A. Notwithstanding anything contained in this Act, the Governor-General may by regulation prescribe that any person who has served with satisfactory record in any Expeditionary Force raised under the provisions of the Defence Act 1903-1915, and who has passed a prescribed examination conducted by a University or other public examining body, notwithstanding that that examination is not competitive, shall be deemed to have passed a prescribed examination conducted by examiners appointed under this Act."

Mr. TUDOR (Yarra) [9.2].—Most honorable members must have read the unwarrantable attack made upon the ordinary Public Service examination by Professor Harrison Moore, of Melbourne University. That gentleman stated that, on account of the way in which the examinations were held, the Public Service was a refuge for the uneducated; that the public servants, both State and Commonwealth, were absolutely uneducated, and were not fit to hold their present positions. If the prescribed examination mentioned in this new clause means anything at all, it means an examination less severe than that which candidates have to pass to-day, because nobody would propose that an examination paper to be set before returned soldiers should be more difficult than that which is submitted to the ordinary candidates from the State and public schools, business colleges, and the University. This clause affords a fitting opportunity for somebody representing the Government to defend the existing system of examination, if it is right, or, if it is wrong, to announce their intention to alter it at the earliest possible moment. I know that very often the examination is of greater educational than

practical value. So far from the Service being the refuge of the uneducated, we very often find that there are in the Government Departments educated persons who are not able to transact departmental business as well as are many persons who have not had a high education. In my opinion, the men who have entered the Commonwealth Service by competitive examination will compare more favorably with those who entered it before there was any public examination at all. Every man who has held Ministerial office will admit that to be a fact. I hope that the Minister will assure the House that the present examination, although it may not get the best possible men, does insure that the recruits to the Service do not lack educational equipment.

Mr. RODGERS.—The charge made by Professor Harrison Moore should be either refuted or the system should be altered.

Mr. TUDOR.—That is my contention.

Mr. GROOM (Darling Downs—Honorary Minister) [9.8].—The honorable member has sprung this matter upon me in connexion with a Bill introduced for the sole purpose of dealing with returned soldiers. I know absolutely nothing of what Professor Harrison Moore has said, and I certainly will not undertake tonight to either refute or support his statement.

Mr. RODGERS.—He made a very serious charge.

Mr. GROOM.—I have not seen his statement; I have been kept busy with other matters. I ask honorable members not to raise on a Bill dealing with returned soldiers a general discussion on the Public Service. On another occasion it will be more opportune to raise this question, and it can then be answered by the Minister in charge of the Public Service Commissioner's Office. Any such discussion would be quite alien to the purposes of this Bill.

Proposed new clause agreed to.

Mr. GROOM (Darling Downs—Honorary Minister) [9.10].—I move—

That the following new clause be added to the Bill:—

"6. (1) Notwithstanding anything contained in the principal Act, or the regulations thereunder, any person who has

successfully, passed any prescribed examination to which this section applies, and has served with satisfactory record in any Expeditionary Force raised under the provisions of the Defence Act 1903-1915, shall be eligible for appointment to the Public Service at any time before he has attained the age of fifty-one years.

"(2) This section applies to any examination for admission to the Public Service for which the maximum age fixed for candidates at the date of examination exceeds sixteen years."

During the debate on another Bill a very important issue was raised. A student may have passed the literary examination for the clerical service, and then have gone abroad on active service. This new clause proposes that instead of his having to pass another examination on his return the certificate for the previous examination may be presented and accepted as a qualification.

Proposed new clause agreed to.

Mr. TUDOR (Yarra) [9.13].—I move—

That the following new clause be added to the Bill:—

Nothing in this Act shall entitle the Public Service Commissioner to dispense with the services of any employee merely by reason of the fact that he has not been accepted for active service abroad.

Several times during the consideration of this Bill, fear has been expressed that in the administration of this law the Public Service Commissioner will assume that it is right that every man, no matter what his obligations, should be dismissed to make room for a returned soldier who may, and probably will, be a single man. We are told that we may trust to the administration of the Act, but the Commissioner will probably be guided by the definite language of the law. For that reason I am proposing this clause as a safeguard. Ordinary temporary employees can remain in the Service only six months, but returned soldiers may, according to the provision to which we have already agreed, be kept in the Service for years. The clause is not meant as an instruction to the Public Service Commissioner, so much as an expression of the feeling of the Committee. Otherwise those who have to administer the Act will say, "The whole object of the Act is to give employment to returned soldiers, and these men, because they had not gone to the war, must

be put off." All I ask is that while there is employment for them men who have given satisfaction in the various Departments for one, two, or three months should be allowed to finish their six months' term.

Mr. GREGORY (Dampier) [9.16].—I hope the Government will stick to the Bill, and accept no amendment. I cannot understand the opposition to the Bill or the long delay in passing it. I should like to make it a great deal more stringent than it is so far as regards a large number that have got into the Service recently. One has only to go round the Departments, and see a number of those who are there, to recognise how they have got there. The Departments will be all the better for a bit of cleaning up. If I had my way, I would put in the Bill an amendment which would prevent the Government from giving the preference they have been giving in the past to certain people. It is a lasting disgrace to the Government of the day that a very large section of absolutely disloyal people are getting employment from them at the present time. I want to refer more particularly to the Clerks' Union. This organization almost at the beginning of the war sent a resolution to Mr. Fisher, the then Prime Minister, pointing out that a great many of those who had gone to the Front had gone there only through empty bellies, to use their own elegant expression—a gross insult to the men who have gone on active service. It is the members of that body who are getting preference. Since then, we have seen resolutions passed by the same organization stating not only that they would do nothing in any shape or form to help recruiting, but that they are going to use all their efforts for a "just and honorable peace." I have no time for that section, and am hopeful that the Government will insist on seeing that the men who have gone to the Front, and are willing to make the supreme sacrifice for us, get all the preference that it is possible to give them when they return.

Mr. GROOM (Darling Downs—Honorary Minister) [9.18].—I am sorry that I cannot see my way to accept the proposal of the Leader of the Opposition. There may be several reasons why a man in temporary employment ought not to be dispensed with, but the honorable member is trying to limit his clause to

one reason only—that he has not been accepted for service abroad. In any case the Commissioner has no power under the Act to dismiss. The only persons who can dismiss are the Minister, or the permanent head of the Service. It is quite conceivable that the equities of individual cases may be so strong as to entitle them to earnest consideration. I gave this afternoon two cases mentioned by members on both sides, one of a married man, a reject, with two or three months of service to run, being displaced to make room for a returned soldier who is a single man. I said a case like that was a matter for consideration.

Mr. TUDOR.—I am afraid the Commissioner will read into the Bill a direction to give preference to returned soldiers in every case.

Mr. GROOM.—It is not the Commissioner who reads anything into the Bill. The other case that appealed to members on both sides was that of a man well advanced in years, who had given a few months' service to the Government, and had several sons at the Front, being displaced by a returned soldier who was a single man. In those circumstances, it would be the duty of the officer to consider the equities of the case, and try to place the returned soldier somewhere else. While carrying out the distinct wish of Parliament that preference should be given to returned soldiers, it will be the duty of the officer to consider the equities of individual cases. That is the spirit in which he should approach the administration of this Bill. I ask the honorable member not to press the amendment.

Mr. TUDOR.—You have not met us at all in regard to that matter.

Mr. GROOM.—We have tried to meet the honorable member in every way. To do what the honorable member wants we should have to draft a clause setting out a number of specific cases and worded after this fashion: "A returned soldier should be entitled to preference, but this shall not apply (a) in the case of so-and-so; (b) in the case of so-and-so; and so on."

Mr. FENTON.—Is it not possible that regulations of that character may be framed?

Mr. GROOM.—I do not think it is advisable to frame them. It is better to assume that the Bill will be administered with good sense and discretion, and

with full consideration of the equities of each individual case. It has frequently happened, when it has been sought in Acts of Parliament to make exemptions in regard to particular cases, that the result has been to exclude the consideration of other just cases.

Mr. FINLAYSON (Brisbane) [9.22].—The effect of the new clause will practically disappear before six months at the outside, because the men in the Service affected by it are entitled to only six months' employment. In 90 per cent. of the cases their employment would not be continued beyond the specified six months. The other 10 per cent. would be cases such as the Minister has quoted where special circumstances call for special consideration. Is it fair that the men now in employment should have their work interfered with merely because they have not been accepted for active service? To many of them the clause is simply a polite intimation that they will be displaced at the end of their six months by returned soldiers.

Mr. GROOM.—The clause refers only to rejects.

Mr. FINLAYSON.—It refers to men who have not been accepted for active service for any reason whatever. They are entitled to this consideration at any rate till the end of their term. Some of us have considerable misgivings that the Commissioner may act in a very drastic manner in order to make room for returned soldiers without considering the interests, commitments, or domestic responsibilities of those in the Service. I do not think returned soldiers generally desire men to be put out of employment summarily and without consideration in order that work may be found for them.

Mr. JOSEPH COOK (Parramatta—Minister for the Navy) [9.26].—I cannot help feeling that the new clause has been very astutely worded. Look at it how you will, it renders the whole Bill nugatory. It puts on an equality with a returned soldier the man who has not offered for service abroad, and gives him a leg in.

Mr. CONSIDINE.—For how many months?

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—I do not care for how many. Whether the Leader of the Opposition intended it or not, the effect of the clause is to render the Bill nugatory. I cannot help feeling that

it is intended to do by a side wind what the Opposition have been trying to do all night. I never saw such support in my life as has been offered to this Bill by honorable members opposite, who asseverate with every breath they draw that they are in favour of preference to returned soldiers; and yet try by every conceivable means to make the whole measure null and void. This kind of thing is not quite honest and above board. Either they are in favour of preference to returned soldiers or they are not. If they are they should not be trying all the evening, as they have been, to make the Bill of no use. For instance, there is the proposal that the man who is doing something here shall be brought into this matter. We are told that certain men have gone to Rabaul and other places. Everybody has intense sympathy with the men who have done their duty.

Mr. TUDOR.—The man who goes to Rabaul is in it now.

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—But the honorable member wants more. He has been asking all the evening that the man who happens to have been at Townsville shall be put in.

Mr. FENTON.—I know men who have contracted malaria through having been sent to Papua, and feel the effects still.

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—So do I. Those men will always be entitled to the generous consideration of the Government, and the Government will do all they can to help them. This Bill, however, sets out to do one thing directly. That is, to give preference to returned soldiers. By "returned soldiers" is meant soldiers who have been participants in this great world struggle, and have returned from the fighting Fronts. It is felt that they should be given preference over and above those who stay here. Yet the proposal of the Leader of the Opposition is to strike away this preference. If it were agreed to, the only course open to us would be to withdraw the Bill. Reduced to its simplest terms, the amendment means that the man who has not offered for active service, and therefore has not been accepted, shall have as much right to employment as the man who has gone to the war and returned.

Mr. TUDOR.—The amendment refers only to those now in the Service.

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—Then it is most unfortunately worded. A man cannot be accepted if he has not offered.

Mr. CONSIDINE.—The amendment merely says that the Commissioner shall not dismiss a man merely because he has not been accepted for active service.

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—Honorable members are against the proposed preference to returned soldiers.

Mr. CONSIDINE.—We are against economic conscription.

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—The Bill says that where two men are applying for a job, and one of them has "done his bit," he shall get it.

Mr. CONSIDINE.—No one on this side objects to that. But we say that a temporary employee who has not served six months shall not be dismissed merely because he has not been accepted for active service.

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—The real desire of honorable members opposite is that no distinction shall be made between the man who has not offered and the man who has served. It would be more honest to declare against the Bill straight out.

Mr. CONSIDINE.—That is what the honorable member wishes us to do.

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—That declaration could not be made more clearly than by the amendment.

Mr. FENTON.—That is an exaggerated statement, which the right honorable gentleman would not make if he knew what had been said during the debate.

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—I have heard the pleas that have been set up all the evening for the "stay-at-homes."

Mr. TUDOR.—Men with five sons at the Front have been dismissed to make room for single men. I shall fight against that.

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—The honorable member has only one case in his mind. I understand that the man to whom he refers has five sons at the Front and five others at home. I do not know his circumstances, but surely his sons are all able to give their bit, and he cannot be the poverty-stricken person that he has been represented to be. Many persons are worse off than he.

Mr. CONSIDINE.—And many better off.

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—I have no doubt of that. I say nothing against this man, but in my judgment he cannot be the worst-off man in the community, and the Government are trying to meet his

case. On this one case honorable members would base a law. Honorable members will find that those now in the Service will be treated as generously as the Government can treat them. It seems to be thought that those concerned in the administration of the Public Service will act like callous fools; but that is absurd. It is my experience that a permanent official is indisposed to part with men who are efficient, even to make way for soldiers. They do not like to have their offices disturbed any more than is possible. Honorable members may rely on that trait of human nature for a sufficiently conservative administration to do justice to those who have stayed at home. I hope that the Leader of the Opposition will withdraw the amendment.

Mr. TUDOR.—After the right honorable gentleman has made a violent attack on me!

Mr. HIGGS (Capricornia) [9.37].—I am not surprised at the attack on the Leader of the Opposition made by the Minister for the Navy. The returned soldier was to be generously treated by this Win-the-war Government, but the only thing it can do for him is to find him a billet by discharging some unfortunate temporary employee who has not been accepted for active service. In every State returned soldiers are complaining that the Government has not fulfilled its promises. No wonder, then, that the Minister for the Navy is angry when the Leader of the Opposition proposes to deprive the Win-the-war Government of an opportunity to discharge married men in order to put returned soldiers in their places.

Mr. GROOM.—The amendment does not mention married men.

Mr. HIGGS.—The amendment is designed to prevent the Government from abandoning its promise to respect the vote of the people on the 28th October last, when conscription was defeated. This Win-the-war Government desires to bring about economic conscription by discharging temporary employees from the Public Service, and giving their places to returned soldiers. Ministers have been talking of spending £22,000,000 in buying land for the soldiers.

Mr. POYNTON.—The honorable member talked about that, too.

Mr. HIGGS.—I spoke of the danger of doing that.

Mr. POYNTON.—The honorable member talked of it in his scheme.

Mr. HIGGS.—The honorable member for Grey was at one time very happy, but, having had to leave the Treasury after only three months of office, he has become, as has been said, somewhat soured.

Mr. BOYD.—The honorable member for Capricornia was happy because he was there longer than the honorable member for Grey.

Mr. HIGGS.—I was in the Treasury for twelve months, and should have liked to stay longer, but there are compensations in being out of the position. I do not think that there is a single returned soldier who wishes to get a job by the discharge of some man already in the Service. But the returned men look to the Government to carry out its promise. Has the Minister for the Navy no imagination? Can he think of no other way of giving effect to the promises to provide for the returned soldier and his dependants? This Win-the-war Ministry was hailed as a Ministry of men of talent. Ministers were described as men of great business ability. Yet all they can do for the heroes who have returned from Gallipoli and France is to sack persons now in the Service to give them a job. I remember the time when the Minister for the Navy used to say that no man was so unhappy as the unfortunate who could not get employment.

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—I say that now.

Mr. HIGGS.—Why does the right honorable gentleman wish to discharge temporary employees from the Public Service before they have had the nine months' employment to which they are entitled?

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—I do not wish to discharge them.

Mr. HIGGS.—Then the least the Minister can do is to allow the proposal of the Leader of the Opposition to be accepted. I trust that the amendment will be pressed to a division, and that the Win-the-war Ministry will be compelled to find some other way of giving effect to its pledge to provide for returned men than the discharging of men already in the Service.

Mr. LAIRD SMITH (Denison) [9.45].—I should not have risen had it not been for the speech of the honorable member for Capricornia, who is a past master in the art of acting. He plays a part in this

House, so that the people may think that the Government and its supporters form a dreadful party.

Mr. GROOM.—It is splendid comedy.

Mr. LAIRD SMITH.—Knowing the honorable member, as I do, to me it is more like tragedy! The honorable member would have public servants believe that the Government intend to do something for which this Bill really makes no provision. As a matter of fact, all that we do in this Bill is to provide machinery to give effect to a section in the Act of 1915, which was inserted by the Government of which he was a member, and which really provided for preference to returned soldiers. I helped the honorable member to put in the Public Service Bill of 1915 a clause in which it was provided that no permanent appointments to the Public Service should be made until after the war. That provision was made by the Government to which the honorable member belonged in order to show that we approved of men volunteering, and would do our best to assist them on their return. That being so, why should the honorable member for Capricornia endeavour in this way to throw dust in the eyes of public servants? They are an intelligent body of men, and have been too long associated with politicians not to "have their weight." A politician may deceive ordinary members of the public, but he cannot deceive public servants. I was for twenty years behind members of Parliament like the honorable member for Capricornia, over whom there has come a great change. When he was in office he was a most cautious Minister. What a different man he is when he has not upon him the responsibility of a Minister. No more cautious man—no man with a keener intellect—ever sat on the Treasury bench. I hope that new members will not be tempted by the little baits thrown out by the Opposition.

Mr. TUDOR.—Do not worry! This will be a party vote.

Mr. LAIRD SMITH.—Why should we have a party vote on any question affecting the welfare of men who have done so much for us?

Mr. TUDOR.—I say that every honorable member opposite will follow the Leader of the Government in this matter.

Mr. LAIRD SMITH.—The honorable member for Adelaide this evening made

statements which, upon reflection, he will regret.

Mr. YATES.—They were all absolutely true.

Mr. LAIRD SMITH.—The honorable member suggested that there was not a manufacturer, a commercial man, or a rich man in Australia who had a son at the Front.

Mr. YATES.—I did not.

Mr. LAIRD SMITH.—I have no brief to plead the cause of the rich; but I wish to be just, and I say at once that I scarcely know of a wealthy family one member of which, at least, has not volunteered. Scores and scores of such families are represented at the Front, not by one, but by every son.

Returning to the question immediately under consideration, I would point out that these appointments will not be made in the first place by the Public Service Commissioner. The Commissioner will merely make a recommendation to the responsible Minister, and it will be for him to make the appointment. Ministers are subject to the criticism of this Parliament, and I have yet to meet a Minister of the Crown who would make an appointment without first giving it careful consideration. Then there is a further condition that returned soldiers must pass a prescribed examination. The majority of returned soldiers who are appointed to the Public Service will only be given temporary employment.

Mr. HIGGS.—Is this all the Win-the-war Government can do for the returned soldiers?

Mr. LAIRD SMITH.—It is doing far more than the honorable member would have attempted to do in the direction of giving effect to the clause in the Bill passed while he was in office. Why should there be all this make-believe on the part of the Opposition? During the recent election campaign I received from a constituent a letter, in which he said he had been informed by the Opposition that if our party were returned to power all Public Service increments would be stopped. We have been returned to power, but nothing of the kind has occurred. Is this another of the red herrings that the Opposition would draw across the trail in order to make public servants believe that their friends are to be found only on that side of the House? I shall never vote for any Bill that would

do an injustice to public servants. For many years I was closely connected with public servants, and trusted by them. Whenever a vote was taken to select representatives to wait on the Government, I always occupied a leading position on the poll. It was known that I would do my best for them, and I shall still do so.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. ATKINSON). — The honorable member is now departing from the question.

Mr. TUDOR.—Hear, hear! The soldier-member was called to order, and it is time the honorable member was pulled up.

Mr. LAIRD SMITH.—I always obey the Chair. Unlike the Leader of the Opposition, I am not infallible.

Mr. TUDOR.—That is the way with rats; they always squeal.

Mr. LAIRD SMITH.—The Leader of the Opposition is getting "dirty" and unkind. If the honorable member will try to throw mud at me, one of these days some of it will splash back on him. I could hurt him if I wished, and if he goes much further I shall say things that will make him squirm.

Mr. TUDOR.—Go ahead.

Mr. JOSEPH COOK. — Is the Leader of the Opposition in order in speaking of the honorable member for Denison as a rat?

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN.—He is not.

Mr. TUDOR.—I withdraw the remark.

Mr. LAIRD SMITH.—Such remarks do not hurt me. The honorable member is protected, because I desire to conform to the ruling of the Chair. I did not hear the whole of the speech made by the honorable member, because at the outset of it I was introducing a deputation of unionists to the Postmaster-General. Many of the unionists still have confidence in me, although I am sitting behind the Government.

I hold that returned soldiers will not, as some honorable members suggest, rush the Public Service. It is not so attractive as some people would have us believe. The members of it are subject to criticism to the like of which no other body of workmen have to submit, and many public servants would be much better off to-day if they had applied to some outside occupation the energy which they have thrown into their work as Government employees. For all these reasons I do not believe that

returned soldiers will rush for positions in the Service, and we are not likely to have Ministers discharging public servants in a wholesale way in order to find employment for returned soldiers. My experience is that heads of Departments, in most cases, are anxious to do justice to their fellow servants.

Mr. JOSEPH COOK. — The honorable member never knew one to be anxious to send away a good man.

Mr. LAIRD SMITH.—Decidedly not. The honorable member for Franklin said that many eligible men in the Service had not volunteered. On the other hand there are many who would willingly go to the Front, but whose services are considered to be of more value here.

Mr. TUDOR. — The honorable member for Dampier made the same remark as the honorable member for Franklin.

Mr. LAIRD SMITH.—Such statements are not fair. Men cannot be trained in twenty-four hours to fill responsible positions in the Public Service. No one knows that better than does the ex-Minister for Trade and Customs.

Mr. TUDOR.—The Department of Trade and Customs is the one Department in which very few temporary men are employed.

Mr. LAIRD SMITH.—The honorable member's success in the administration of that Department was largely due to the fact that he had well-trained men at his elbow, so to speak, all the time he was there. Untrained men might disclose departmental secrets, just as outside business secrets are often talked of in various clubs. The success of our public Departments is largely due to the training our men have received, and to the sacrifices they are willing to make. I have been surprised to learn of the overtime worked by men in various Departments, who cannot be replaced. I have known £39,250 to be saved in a Department in one year as the result of the loyal co-operation of the staff. I also know of another Minister who was able to get £1,400 back into a Department largely because of the ability displayed by those under him. I realize what these men are doing, and what their value is; and I feel sure that no Minister would prevent a capable man from being promoted with a view of putting another in his place. I have no fear of the clause, and therefore I support it.

Mr. CONSIDINE (Barrier) [10.0].—I am rather intimidated at the start by the grave exposure of the ex-Treasurer by the honorable member for Denison. That honorable member, and also the Minister for the Navy, have accused honorable members on this side of being against the men who went to the Front, and of not having the courage to openly state our opposition to the employment of returned soldiers. I have no apology to offer for my position, notwithstanding the remarks made by the ancient warriors opposite.

Mr. BOYD.—What is the matter with you?

Mr. CONSIDINE.—What is the matter with me? I am expressing my own opinion, whether it pleases or displeases the honorable member.

Mr. BOYD. — Mighty convenient opinion!

Mr. CONSIDINE.—Why do you not go to the Front? What is wrong with you now?

Mr. BOYD.—Nothing much.

Mr. WEBSTER.—The honorable member for Barrier does not express opinions here that he expresses elsewhere.

Mr. CONSIDINE.—The time has been so much taken up by the Postmaster-General and others in demonstrating to the House their inherent genius that there has been little opportunity for others so far. The amendment proposed by the Leader of the Opposition only proposes that the Commissioner shall not dispense with the services of any individual employed at the present time, on the ground that he has not been accepted for active service. It has been said by honorable members opposite that the proposal is really meant to apply to those who did not volunteer, and personally I should have liked to see it that way. The people of Australia have decided that conscription shall not be enforced; and, in my opinion, unless the amendment is carried, the Government will dispense with the services of men, not because they are incompetent, but because they have not volunteered, thus getting behind the verdict of the people, and giving a lead to private firms to indulge in what is termed outside "economic conscription."

Mr. WEBSTER.—You would let the returned soldiers starve.

Mr. CONSIDINE.—No, I would make the Government carry out the promises they made to the soldiers.

Mr. WEBSTER.—You did not make any promises to them, anyhow!

Mr. CONSIDINE.—Consequently I shall not be accused of breaking any promises. I only promise what I can carry out, and I make very few promises.

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—I think I would drop the "I" if I were you.

Mr. CONSIDINE. — Possibly; but there is such a thing as teaching by example; and it may be that I am now where the Minister for the Navy was in his Republican days.

Mr. JOSEPH COOK. — You are a very brave man, there is no doubt!

Mr. CONSIDINE.—Not nearly so brave as I look, and I can assure the honorable gentleman that I am quite harmless, and he need have no fear. Whether the opinions I express meet with the approval of honorable members opposite or not does not concern me in the slightest, because the people who sent me here sent me to express those opinions.

Mr. JOSEPH COOK. — I do not think your opinions concern anybody else much.

Mr. CONSIDINE.—Possibly not; and there is very little that does concern the honorable gentleman once he gets on these benches. The amendment, if accepted by the Government, would enable them to say that it is not their intention to get behind the verdict of the people on the verdict of conscription. Of course, I know that what we say on this side does not make any difference, whether in regard to this or any other Bill. The Government have the majority, and are able to do what they like.

Mr. BOYD.—That is exactly what your Government did.

Mr. CONSIDINE.—I am not complaining because you are over there and I am here. If we were over there with a majority, we would put through our legislation. At present I am merely pointing out—though, of course, I may be wrong—that the idea behind this Bill is to force men out of employment because they have not volunteered. In the face of the decision of the people, it is not competent for this Government or any private firm to so act towards men who have not volunteered, for reasons of their

own, whatever those reasons may be. Private firms will take the lead now offered to them by the Government; indeed, in Western Australia already private firms have petitioned the State Ministry to refuse employment to men who have not volunteered.

Mr. BOYD.—Why do such men not go to a country where they need not fight.

Mr. CONSIDINE.—They exercise the right to please themselves, as the honorable member does. It was men who had fought for liberty in other countries, and who came here, that gave us the rights and liberties we now enjoy; and in this connexion no thanks are due to the honorable member or the interests he represents.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN.—I must ask the honorable member to confine himself to the clause.

Mr. CONSIDINE.—I was pointing out that if the Government accept the amendment they will disabuse the public mind of the idea that it is their intention to exercise economic conscription.

Mr. SINCLAIR.—You do not mind "jockeying" the soldier out of a job!

Mr. CONSIDINE.—I am not "jockeying" anybody out of a job, but it is not right to remove a man from his present employment for the express purpose of employing a soldier. The amendment insures that such a thing will not be done; and I am sure that it will be, if the amendment is not passed.

Mr. BOYD.—Your doubts and beliefs do not affect our policy!

Mr. CONSIDINE.—No; and neither will what I say. For all practical purposes we on this side may save our breath; but we have been accused by the Minister for the Navy and others of holding up this Bill all the night, and grave exposures of the apparently foul designs of members on this side are being made. The whole thing is ridiculous.

Question.—That the proposed new clause be added to the Bill—put. The House divided.

Ayes	10
Noes	31
Majority	21

AYES.

Considine, M. P.	West, J. E.
Finlayson, W. F.	Yates, G. E.
Higgs, W. G.	
Maloney, Dr.	<i>Tellers:</i>
Tudor, F. G.	Fenton, J. E.
Wallace, C.	Mathews, J.

NOES.

Archibald, W. O.	McWilliams, W. J.
Boyd, J. A.	Palmer, A. C.
Cook, Joseph	Pigott, H. R. M.
Corser, E. B. C.	Poynton, A.
Fleming, W. M.	Rodgers, A. S.
Foster, Richard	Sampson, S.
Glynn, P. McM.	Sinclair, H.
Gregory, H.	Smith, Laird
Groom, L. E.	Story, W. H.
Heitmann, E. E.	Spence, W. G.
Hughes, W. M.	Watt, W. A.
Irvine, Sir William	Webster, W.
Lynch, J.	Wise, G. H.
Mackay, G. H.	<i>Tellers:</i>
Manifold, J. C.	Greene, W. M.
Maxwell, G. A.	Orchard, R. B.

PAIRS.

Abbott, General	Anstey, F.
Bamford, F. W.	Blakeley, A.
Bayley, J. G.	Catts, J. H.
Burchell, R. J.	Charlton, M.
Forrest, Sir John	Mahoney, W. G.
Fowler, J. M.	McDonald, C.
Lamond, H.	McGrath, D. C.
Ryrie, General	Nicholls, S. R.
Salmon, Dr. Cartv	Riley, E.
Smith, Bruce	Watkins, D.
Thomson, John	Brennan, F.
Best, Sir Robert	Page, J.

Question so resolved in the negative.

Proposed new clause negatived.

Title agreed to.

Bill reported with amendments; report adopted.

Bill read a third time.

ADJOURNMENT.

MEMBERS' NAMES IN "HANSARD."

Motion (by Mr. GROOM) proposed—That the House do now adjourn.

Dr. MALONEY (Melbourne) [10.20].

—I wish to make a suggestion to you, Mr. Speaker, which, if adopted, will be of advantage to honorable members, and also to people outside Parliament. Many of the general public are not aware of the name of the honorable member for Ballarat, or the honorable member for Balclava, or of any other honorable member who is referred to in *Hansard* by the name of his constituency. I suggest that when the member for a constituency is mentioned, his surname should be printed in brackets, so that a person may read *Hansard* with more comfort than is possible at present. It was at my suggestion that we followed the practice of the Imperial Parliament in providing cards to be sent in to honorable members by visitors to the House, and I suggest that we again follow Imperial precedent in the matter I have just mentioned. Only

last week, in referring to *Hansard* of seven years ago, I had to turn to the front of the volume repeatedly in order to discover the name of the honorable member referred to in the course of debate. The thought struck me that if I, with my parliamentary experience, found difficulty in identifying honorable members by their constituencies, the general public would have even greater difficulty.

Dr. Maloney.

Mr. SPEAKER.—I think the honorable member's suggestion is one that would meet with the approval of honorable members. At any rate, it is worthy of consideration, and I shall confer with the Principal Parliamentary Reporter with that end in view.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

House adjourned at 10.22 p.m.

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Chairman of Committees—The Honorable John Moore Chanter.

Abbott, General Percy New England	Kelly, Hon. William Wentworth (N.S.W.)
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Anstey, Frank .. Bourke (V.)	Lamond, Hector .. Illawarra (N.S.W.)
Archibald, Hon. William Hindmarsh (S.A.)	Leckie, John William .. Indi (V.)
Oliver	Lister, John Henry .. Corio (V.)
⁴ Atkinson, Llewelyn .. Wilmot (T.)	Livingston, John .. Barker (S.A.)
⁴ Bamford, Hon. Frederick Herbert (Q.)	Lynch, John .. Werriwa (N.S.W.)
William	Mackay, George Hugh .. Lilley (Q.)
Bayley, James Garfield .. Oxley (Q.)	Mahony, William George Dalley (N.S.W.)
Best, Hon. Sir Robert Kooyong (V.)	Maloney, William .. Melbourne (V.)
Wallace, K.C.M.G.	Manifold, Hon. James Corangamite (V.)
Blakeley, Arthur .. Darling (N.S.W.)	Chester
⁸ Boyd, Hon. James Arthur Henty (V.)	Mathews, James .. Melbourne Ports (V.)
Brennan, Frank .. Batman (V.)	Maxwell, George Arnot .. Fawkner (V.)
Burchell, Reginald John Fremantle (W.A.)	McDonald, Hon. Charles Kennedy (Q.)
Catts, James Howard .. Cook (N.S.W.)	McGrath, David Charles Ballaarat (V.)
Chanter, Hon. John Moore Riverina (N.S.W.)	McWilliams, William Franklin (T.)
Chapman, Hon. Austin .. Eden-Monaro	James
(N.S.W.)	Nicholls, Samuel Robert .. Macquarie (N.S.W.)
⁴ Charlton, Matthew .. Hunter (N.S.W.)	Orchard, Richard Beaumont Nepean (N.S.W.)
Considine, Michael Patrick Barrier (N.S.W.)	Page, Hon. James .. Maranoa (Q.)
Cook, Right Hon. Joseph, Parramatta (N.S.W.)	Palmer, Albert Clayton .. Echuca (V.)
P.C.	Pigott, Henry Robert Calare (N.S.W.)
⁸ Corser, Edward Bernard Wide Bay (Q.)	Maguire
Cresset	Poynton, Hon. Alexander Grey (S.A.)
Falkiner, Franc Brereton Hume (N.S.W.)	Riley, Edward .. South Sydney
Sadleir	(N.S.W.)
Fenton, James Edward Maribyrnong (V.)	Rodgers, Arthur Stanislaus Wannon (V.)
Finlayson, William Fyfe .. Brisbane (Q.)	laus
Fleming, William Mont-Robertson (N.S.W.)	Ryrie, General Granville North Sydney
gomerie	de Laune, C.M.G. (N.S.W.)
Forrest, Right Hon. Sir Swan (W.A.)	Salmon, Hon. Charles Grampians (V.)
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Witty	Sinclair, Hugh .. Moreton (Q.)
Fowler, Hon. James Perth (W.A.)	Smith, Hon. Bruce, K.C. Parkes (N.S.W.)
Mackinnon	Smith, Hon. William Denison (T.)
Glynn, Hon. Patrick Angas (S.A.)	Henry Laird
McMahon, K.C.	² Spence, Hon. William Darwin (T.)
Greene, Walter Massy .. Richmond (N.S.W.)	Guthrie
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Groom, Hon. Littleton Darling Downs (Q.)	Thomson, John .. Cowper (N.S.W.)
Ernest	Tudor, Hon. Frank Yarra (V.)
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Hill, K.C.M.G., K.C.	West, John Edward .. East Sydney (N.S.W.)
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1. Deceased reported 14th June, 1917.

2. Elected 30th June, 1917. Sworn 11th July, 1917.

3. Sworn 11th July, 1917.

4. Appointed Temporary Chairman of Committees, 18th July, 1917.



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